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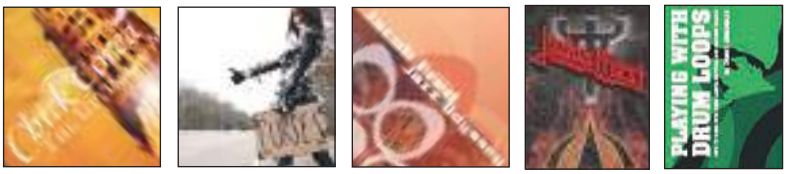

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History: OUR Story

Many of us grew up dreading history class. "That's the *past*, man—I wanna talk about what's going on now!" When you're thirteen, big changes—real, life-altering changes—happen every day. Anything that occurred more than six months ago seems ancient. So who's to blame a young musician if he or she isn't so enthused about listening to music from 1972—or the reminiscences of a drummer who worked before the term "heavy metal" was invented.

Modern Drummer readers are pretty bright, though. They know that learning about the history of our instrument will help them better understand the innovations of today's top players. It all comes from somewhere, right? As this month's cover star, The Red Hot Chili Peppers' Chad Smith, reminds us, even the most innovative guitarist of our time, Jimi Hendrix, was largely following the lead of blues giants like Albert Collins and Hubert Sumlin.

And Chad is one drummer who knows his history. In fact, he seems most comfortable when the conversation turns to Humble Pie, Mott The Hoople, or any of the other heavy rock bands he grew up worshipping. That kind of enthusiasm is infectious, and it was in that spirit that Mr. Smith organized a summit of sorts with studio legends Jim Keltner, Hal Blaine, and Earl Palmer, the fascinating results of which you can read in the exclusive story on page 68.

Of course, in his own feature interview, Chad returns to the theme of learning from our drumming forefathers—and shares some of the ways he incorporates his heroes' ideas into the Chili Peppers' always current sound.

Chad was also kind enough to write the foreword to Modern Drummer Publications' newest book, *The Drummer: 100 Years Of Rhythmic Power And Invention*, which should be in your local book store as you read this. The result of exhaustive research and contributions from *Modern Drummer*'s most knowledgeable writers—as well as several contemporary drumming icons—*The Drummer* aims to collect and clearly explain the stories and musical contributions of the greatest drummers throughout history, all in one big coffee-table-style hardcover book. We feel *The Drummer* is a unique and exciting addition to the existing drum literature, and we hope you are as jazzed reading it as we were putting it together. For more information on the book, go to page 171.

After all, if you can find excitement and innovation in the past, you're that much closer to putting *your* own amazing stamp on the music of the future.

Adam Budofsky

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Volume 30 Number 6

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Terry Bozzio

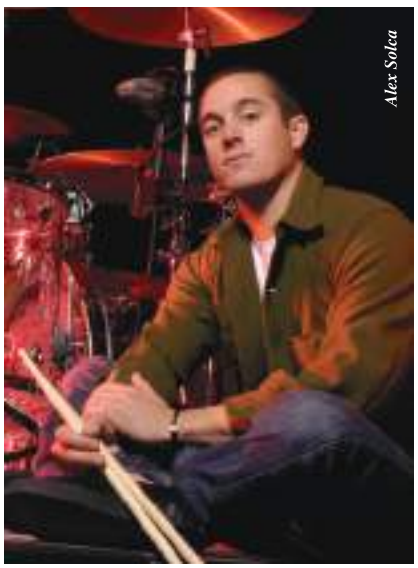
The universe in which I reside has numerous good drummers, and quite a few great drummers. But there are only four on whom I'd bestow the title of "genius." They are: Buddy Rich, Max Roach, Tony Williams, and the inimitable Terry Bozzio.

Consider any groove, tempo, time signature, dynamic level, or compositional complexity, and Terry has it in his back pocket. His artistry is a breath of fresh air, serving to inform the *boom chick, boom boom chick* crowd that the drums can be every bit as sensitive and expressive an instrument as any other.

Thanks for the great story on this great artist. **Matt Schimpf**

Riley Breckenridge

Words cannot describe how happy I was when I saw that *Modern Drummer* was running an article on one of my favorite and most influential drummers, Riley Breckenridge of Thrice. I hadn't seen any articles on him anywhere, so I'm very pleased he has finally gotten into the spotlight. Just when I was beginning to think that *MD* didn't feature any of my favorite drummers, you surprised me and once again made me realize why *MD* is my favorite magazine. **Ryan Hales**


Alex Solca

Michael White

Your March interview with session great Michael White was educational and inspiring. I immediately went out and purchased Richard Elliot's *MetroBlue* and *Richochet* CDs, as well as Steely Dan's *Two Against Nature*, which were featured in the recommended-listening sidebar. Michael's rim-click, tom-tom, and cymbal sounds exhibit a "touch" like no other I've ever heard.

What was also wonderful was Michael's candid discussion of session work. His stories are a must-read for session rookies like myself. **Brian Jezuit**

Alex Solca

Michael White is one of the greatest pocket players of all time. Listening to all the Maze stuff really helped me learn how to just play straight, with a strong, solid pocket.

Mike is also greatly responsible for me moving to Los Angeles and developing my own career. I met Mike backstage at Madison Square Garden while he was playing with Maze. He advised me to move to LA, in order to be in a major market. Mike is and always has been The Man. **Cheron Moore**

12 Drumming Myths Debunked

I enjoyed Adam Budofsky's "12 Drumming Myths" article in the March '06 issue. I agree with every "myth-buster" but one: the use (or suggested non-use) of suspension mounts. I agree with Adam's main point that excessive ring/sustain/decay (as he puts it) coming from toms isn't necessarily desirable. However, I don't feel that the main objective of suspension-mounting one's toms *is* increased sustain. Rather, it is increased *resonance*. In short, a *fuller* tone, not a longer one. **Tom Hipskind**

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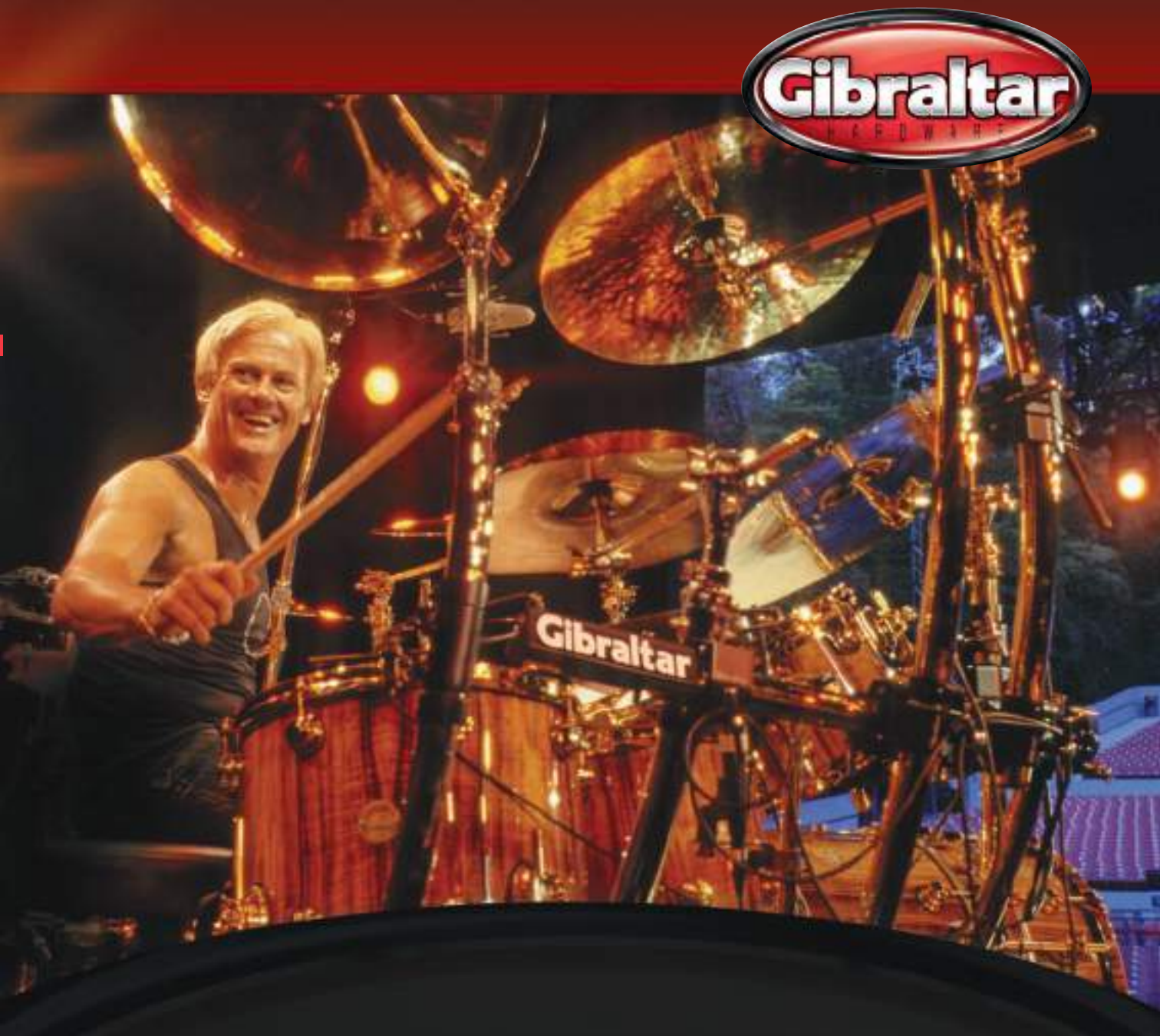

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The purpose of drum suspension is not to create a note that sustains longer. Rather, it is to lower the fundamental pitch that the drum is capable of producing. Longer sustain is a *by-product* of suspension. Moreover, it is the longer *and* lower resonant frequencies that carry the drum's sound, enabling it to travel much farther, with less striking force needed from the drummer. If the drum sustains longer than needed, one can just add some carefully placed muffling to the drumhead. This shortens the *length* of the sound (the decay) without reducing the lower pitch that the suspended drum is now producing.

I will agree with Adam on one point: Ringing toms *can* be a problem in terms of the drums being heard clearly. But "ring" is a term I associate with the leftover high-pitched overtones that remain after the fundamental pitch of the drum has been "choked out" by restrictions to the shell caused by its mounting hardware. Smaller drums—*when suspended*—produce a more controlled and focused sound than larger drums do. There are fewer high frequencies to deal with, while the lower pitches blend in more with other instruments.

In short, drums *are* supposed to resonate. **Gary Gauger, Gauger Percussion Inc.**

(Editor's note: Gary Gauger is the inventor of the RIMS suspension system.)

Top 20 Tracks Of The '70s

Editor's note: Running a "Top 20" list of anything *is likely to generate some controversy. However, this particular article by Mike Haid, which ran in the March '06 issue, received an exceptionally large response. Here's just a sampling.*

Arguably, the greatest rock 'n' roll song ever written (and not just in terms of the drum track) is Mountain's "Mississippi Queen." It comes complete with cowbell and a solid double bass drum groove. And, notably, drummer Corky Laing *wrote* the song.

Speaking of cowbells, Grand Funk's "American Band" is a favorite of mine, but "I'm Your Captain/Closer To Home" is more representative of Don Brewer's ability to arrange drum parts for a song.

Steve Gadd's drumming on "Aja" is phenomenal, but "Fifty Ways To Leave Your Lover," which was literally arranged around the innovative rudimental groove, would be my "must include" choice for this list. And while "Won't Get Fooled Again" is a great Keith Moon choice, I would have gone with "The Real Me," a drum fill from beginning to end. **David Carlson**

While I agree with the top choices, here are a few more honorable mentions. The list includes Michael DeRosier on "Barracuda" (Heart, *Little Queen*, 1977),

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John Panozzo on "Come Sail Away" (Styx, *The Grand Illusion*, 1977), Roger Earl on "Slow Ride" (Foghat, *Fool For The City*, 1975), Mick Tucker on "Ballroom Blitz" (Sweet, *Desolation Boulevard*, 1974), Clem Burke on "Dreaming" (Blondie, *Eat To The Beat*, 1979), and Alex Van Halen: "Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love" (Van Halen, *Van Halen*, 1978). **Randy Omdahl**

I have no quibble with any of the choices. I just want to add mine. First: Bernard Purdie on Aretha Franklin's "Rock Steady." Those hi-hat barks became a staple of funk playing. Second: The Raspberries' Jim Bonfanti on "Ecstasy" from *Side 3*. This song puts him right alongside Keith Moon. Finally, Stephen Bladd of The J. Giels Band on the entire live *Full House* album. I've rarely seen or heard anyone play with the energy level he had. **Jim Griffey**

I really enjoyed the Top 20 Drum Tracks piece. However, Mr. Haid has his facts wrong about the Allman Brothers track "One Way Out." It was not on the *Fillmore East* recording. It was on *Eat A Peach*, which was released a year later. **David Alan**

Bruce Springsteen's early tracks featuring Vinnie Lopez on drums were his most interesting and dynamic, if somewhat "helter skelter." When Max Weinberg came in, his steady, "Ya always know what yer gonna get" style rooted the group from there.

But wait! The best Boss track of all is, of course, "Born To Run"—on which the killer drums are laid down by neither Vinnie nor Max. It's the amazing Ernest "Boom Boom" Carter.

Of all the tracks mentioned in Mike Haid's article, this is one of the most dynamic. Carter's controlled power propels the tune, and his treatment of tricky accents and breaks is pure genius. And that *groove*.... **Bart Yarnold**

Mike Haid offers the following response to the preceding two letters:

David Alan has definitely done his homework. Although "One Way Out" was recorded at the same Fillmore East concerts, it was not on the *At The Fillmore East* LP. Three tracks from those Fillmore shows were indeed included on the *Eat A Peach* LP. Because I grew up playing that song, and also had both the *Fillmore East* and *Eat A Peach* vinyl LPs, I was relying on my middle-aged memory, and I assumed the track was from the *Fillmore* LP.

Bart Yarnold was only one of about fifty *MD* readers who pointed out my error regarding "Born To Run." Yikes!

I offer my apologies to all who may have been offended. Time to double up on the Ginko Biloba!

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Riveted Cymbals

My band instructors have told me that a key to sounding like an authentic jazz drummer is having the "perfect" sizzle cymbal. I know that some jazz drummers employ sizzle Chinas, while others use sizzle rides.

I've watched numerous DVDs and taken notice of the sizzle rides that the drummers have used, but I want to see and hear a ride myself before I actually buy it. Unfortunately, the cymbal companies don't advertise them on their Web sites (at least I can't find them), and the stores around me don't carry them. Do you have any advice on finding popular brands of sizzle rides? **Donovan Hill**

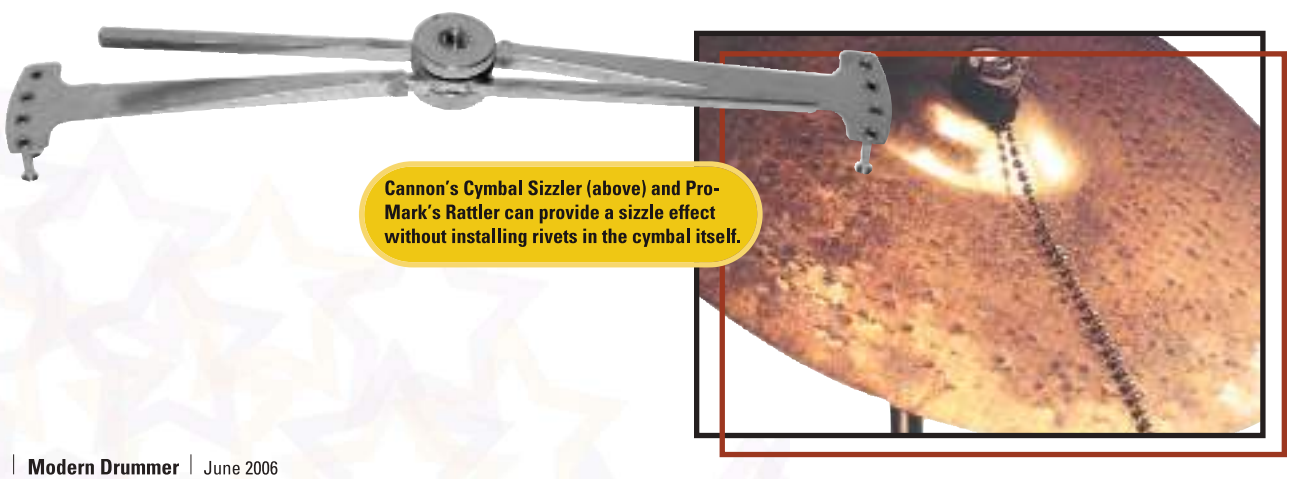
The reason you don't find many cymbals with rivets already installed is that the use of rivets is a very personal choice for most drummers. Still, there are a few notable models that are sold with rivets, such as Zildjian's Armand ride and K Custom Left Side ride, and Wuhan's riveted Chinas.

Most manufacturers offer factory installation of rivets in virtually any ride cymbal (and many other models) as a special-order option. It's also possible (and not particularly difficult) to purchase and install rivets yourself, or to have them installed by a drumshop technician.

Even easier might be to experiment with devices that can be attached to the cymbal stand in order to create a sizzle effect without drilling the cymbal. There are several different items on the market designed to create this effect, including Pro-Mark's Rattler and Cannon Percussion's Cymbal Sizzler.

You can also create your own sizzle effect device. We've known drummers to loop lengths of very light chain or linked-together paperclips around the wing nut of a ride cymbal, so that they drape down over the cymbal and bounce under stick impact. Other drummers have taped a dime to the end of a length of string. The idea is to put something on the surface of the cymbal that's light enough to bounce, but heavy enough to pull a sound out of the cymbal by doing so.

Cymbals that feature factory-installed rivets include the A Zildjian Armand ride and K Custom Left Side ride from Zildjian, and riveted China cymbals from Wuhan.



Cannon's Cymbal Sizzler (above) and Pro-Mark's Rattler can provide a sizzle effect without installing rivets in the cymbal itself.

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Do-It-Yourself "Octobans"

I'm wondering if it's possible to make long, narrow melodic toms (similar to Tama's Octobans) as a do-it-yourself project? If so, where can I find directions and materials?
Curtis Dawley

Making one's own Octoban-style drums isn't a difficult process, depending on how skillful you are with common tools. The tricky part, usually, is finding the shells.

Wood, fiberglass, or acrylic shells in 6" or 8" diameters, with the extended depths of Octobans, are usually a little hard to come by. However, we've heard of several drummers who created Octoban-style instruments quite successfully by using lengths of large-diameter PVC pipe. These may be available in building-supply stores, and they can definitely be ordered from industrial supply sources. PVC can be cut and drilled with standard shop tools. And it can be painted or covered with drum-covering material.

Once the shell material has been obtained, it's a simple matter to contact any of the drum-parts suppliers that advertise in *MD* and on the Web to obtain lugs, tension rods, rims, mounting brackets, covering material (if desired), and heads. Most can also give you instructions on how to measure and mark the shells for the installation of parts.

Once the materials are obtained, you need only cut the PVC pipe into the shell lengths that you desire, create bearing edges on those shells, paint or cover your shells, lay out and drill the holes for the lugs and brackets, and assemble everything.

Bearing edges needn't be cut in a fancy or difficult manner. You can simply sand down the square-cut edges of the pipe to create rounded-over edges that the heads can sit on. Of course, if you have a router and are skilled in its use, you can cut edges with specific angles.

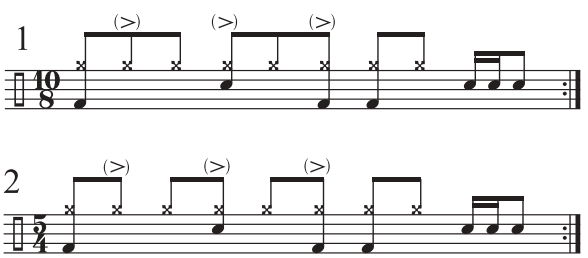
Large-diameter PVC pipe can be used to create do-it-yourself instruments based on Tama's innovative Octobans.

Odd-Meter Radiohead Question

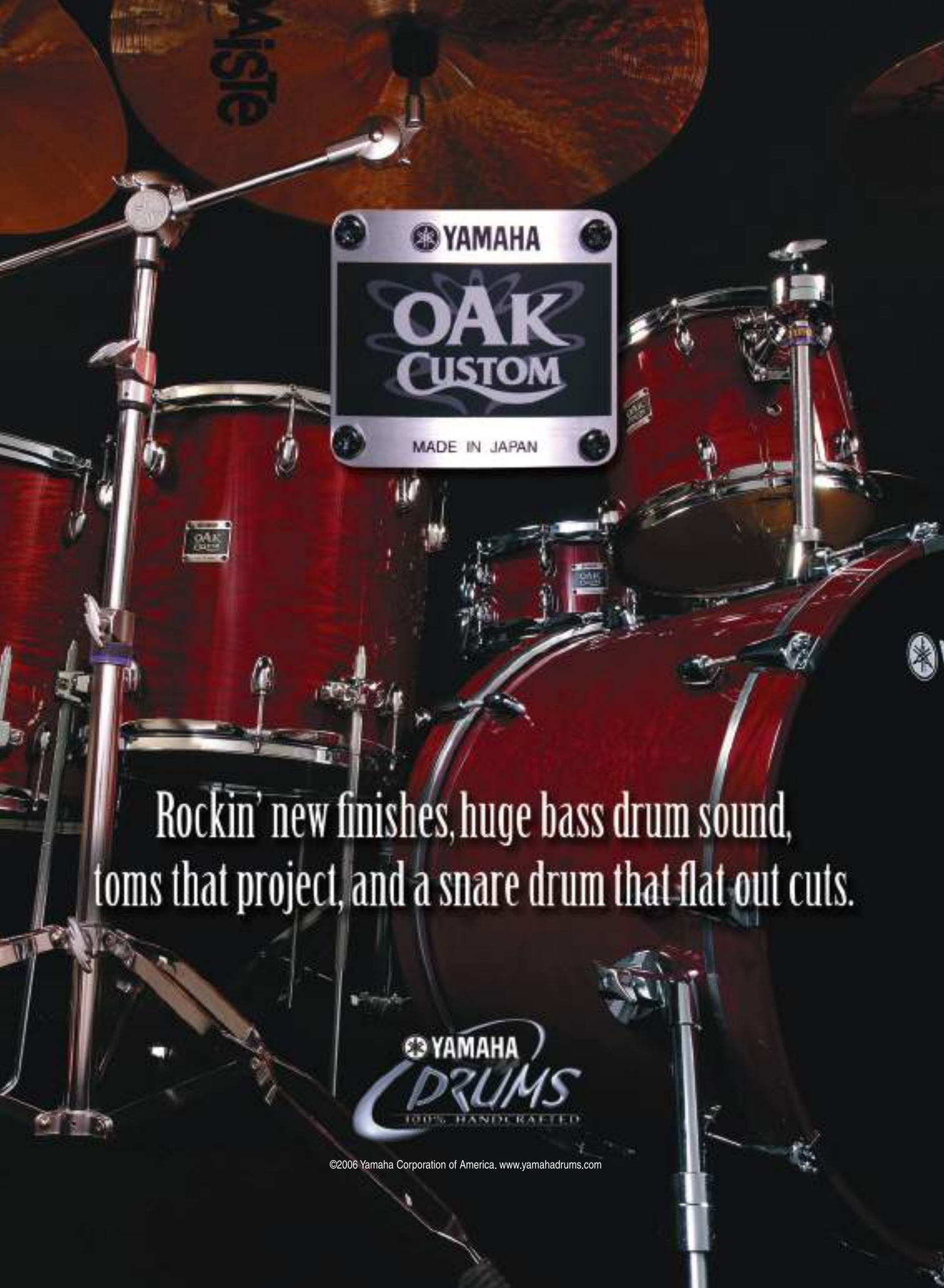
I recently popped in the *Kid A* CD by Radiohead, and when "Morning Bell" came on, I noticed it was in an odd meter. I believe it's in 10/8, but my drummer friends say there's no such thing, and that it would have to be 5/4. My argument is that Phil Selway plays a 6/8 groove ending with four extra 8th notes. Besides, if 10/8 must be scaled down to 5/4, why doesn't 12/8 have to be scaled down to 6/4? I hope you can answer my questions.
Aaron Giua

"Morning Bell" is definitely in an odd meter. But whether to consider the pattern as being in 10/8 or 5/4 is a matter of choice. (And yes, 10/8 does exist.) Both patterns contain ten 8th notes, so either one can be correct. The difference is in how you hear and feel the pattern.

The beat is transcribed at right both in 10/8 and 5/4. The 10/8 version works well if you feel the pattern as a triplet-based 6/8 groove with four extra 8th notes placed at the end. But 5/4 also works if you hear the pattern with a straight quarter-note pulse. The difference with the 5/4 groove is that the first snare hit is syncopated, occurring on the "&" of beat 2. We hope this helps settle the dispute!



Questions For MD's Drum Experts?
Send them to It's Questionable, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, or rvh@moderndrummer.com. Please include your full name with your question.



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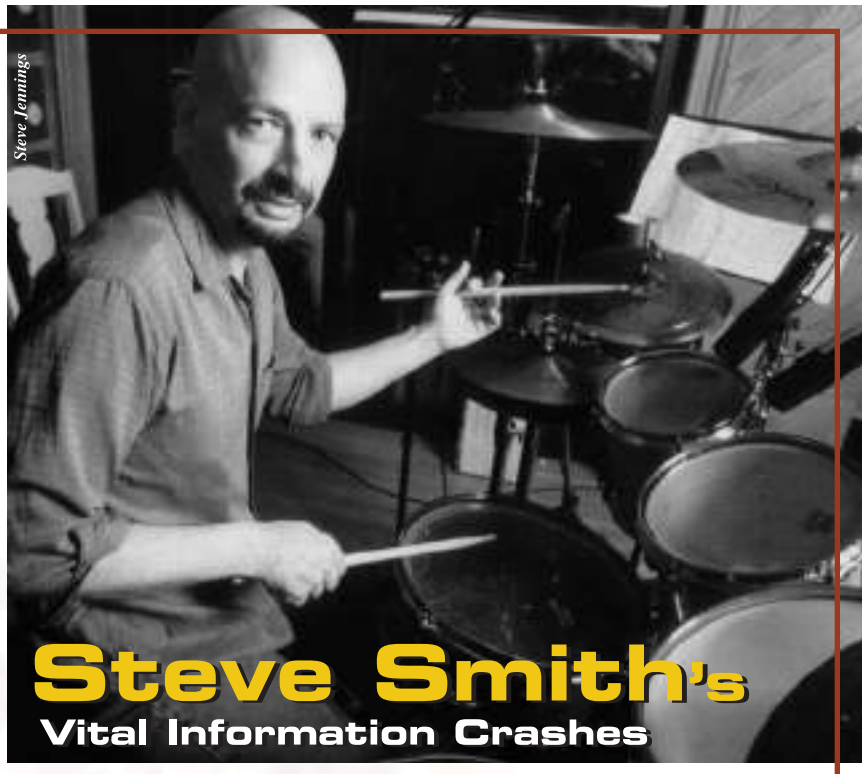

Steve Smith's
Vital Information Crashes

Q What were the two main crashes that you used on the Vital Information *Come On In* CD? The crash in my left headphone has a beautiful shimmer, while the one in my right headphone has a contrasting dry sound. **Greg Patterson**

A For most of that Vital Information recording I used two 18" K Zildjian Special Dry crashes, one on the right side and one on the left side. They're both the same model, but because every Zildjian cymbal has its own personality, they sound different. I used the same setup on the new Tone Center recording *Flashpoint*, in a group I organized with Dave Liebman on sax, Anthony Jackson on bass, and Aydin Esen on keyboards. Plus I've been using this setup live with Vital Information and Steps Ahead. Those crash cymbals give me the punctuation I'm looking for, without a long sustain or the volume being too loud. These sounds blend with, and support, the other musicians that I'm playing with.

Thomas Lang
On Stick Tricks

Q I'm a fourteen-year-old drummer who thinks that your playing style is completely amazing. You have some of the best speed and technique I've ever seen. I saw some clips from your DVD *Creative Control*, and I was blown away. Thank you for the inspiration.

My question is: How do you pull off stick tricks and flips as easily as if you were playing a simple rock beat? Can you suggest any practice methods or special techniques to help me develop these tricks? **Michael Auchter**

A Thanks for your question, Michael. I developed my stick tricks slowly and steadily over a long period of time. I never invested all that much practice in these ideas; they happened naturally and organically over time by "goofing off"—mainly at long and tedious rehearsals. The techniques I use are all shown in the "Sticktrix" section of my DVD *Creative Control*.

At one point I tried to analyze how other great drummers added visuals to their playing. I got a lot of inspiration from marching bands, as well as from drummers like Buddy Rich, Lionel Hampton, Sonny Emory, and Gerry Brown. Still, I think any stick trick is only worth the effort of practicing if all *other* areas of your playing are in order. If your playing suffered in any way from the twirling and tossing, that would be really uncool.

Also, whether or not to use stick tricks always depends on the situation, and, to a certain degree, on the style of music and the environment. Imagine the percussionist of the Vienna Symphony twirling sticks to Strauss's "Also Sprach Zarathustra," or Vinnie Colaiuta twirling his sticks on a serious acoustic trio gig with Chick Corea. That would be weird. On the other hand, *not* twirling sticks in a glam/hair rock band would be just as wrong. Imagine Tommy Lee not twirling his sticks. What kind of world would we be living in?

You'll have to learn for yourself when to be flashy and when to *play music*. There are no rules, but there is good taste and appropriate behavior. Still, doing stick tricks sure is fun, and it always gets a great response from viewers when pulled off casually in the right situation. So twirl away!

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Andrew Lepley

ZORO's MD Festival Setup

Q I recently watched the Modern Drummer Festival 2005 DVD. Please tell me about the snare drum you used, including the top and bottom heads, snare bed, and mic', as well as about the kick drum (heads, mic', and whether there was any muffling). The sound you got was perfect for the half-time shuffle grove. You were right when you said that this groove is very infectious, and you opened my eyes to the many ways to approach it. Thanks! **Gary Morrison**

A My sincere thanks for your kind words, Gary. It was a great honor to be a part of the 2005 MD Festival roster. I'm delighted to know that my performance inspired and somehow enlightened you.

As far as my sound at the Festival goes, the sound in the hall itself was terrific—thanks largely to the great NJPAC sound crew. Rob Wallis & Paul Siegel and their crew at Hudson Music did a fantastic job of transferring what happened live to the DVD.

I also have to give credit to the companies whose instruments I play. Their dedication to excellence and craftsmanship inspires my best performances. It is an absolute pleasure and honor to play their gear, and without it I would have no sound.

To answer your specific questions, the snare drum was a DW 6½x14 solid-wood Collector's series model in black lacquer finish, with a standard factory snare bed. It was fitted with a coated Evans G1 batter and a Hazy 300 snare-side head. The drum was miked with an Audix D1 microphone. The 16x20 kick drum had a clear Evans EMAD batter and a black EQ3 resonant head. Inside the drum I used one DW muffling pillow and two Evans EQ Pads (pillows), which gave me an incredibly fat sound. The bass drum was miked with an Audix D6 microphone.

Just to round out the setup, my toms were 8x10 and 13x16 suspended models, with clear Evans G2s on the tops and clear G1s on the bottoms, miked by Audix D2s. My Sabian cymbal setup included a 21" HHX Groove ride, 14" HHX Groove Hats, and two 18" HHXtreme crashes. I used an Audix SCX1 for the hi-hat and two ADX51s for the overheads.

Keep slammin', and may God bless all your drumming endeavors.

Repeat Bar

A Classic Quote From MD's Past

"To get it really quiet takes you to the maximum edge of your technique. It's a lot easier to wail and get the groove. But to get that groove scaled down takes a lot of technique." **Stewart Copeland, November 2001**

Alex Solca

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Ian Wallace Swinging The King

After an impressive thirty-year career that includes work with King Crimson, Don Henley, Peter Frampton, Stevie Nicks, and Crosby, Stills & Nash, drumming great Ian Wallace was looking for a project that would inspire him and take his playing in a new direction. Then he had a brainstorm.

While on the road with The 21st Century Schizoid Band—a group consisting of former King Crimson members—Wallace found himself thinking, This stuff would sound really good in a straight-ahead jazz format.

So in April 2004, while Wallace was working with pianist Jody Nardone, he brought up the idea. Nardone was intrigued, and the two began to arrange some of King Crimson's progressive rock pieces into jazz tunes. Then, while working with bassist Tim Landers in *The Ten Commandments*, a show at the Kodak Theater in Hollywood, Wallace presented the idea to him. Landers was into it too. And with that, The Crimson Jazz Trio was born. With *King Crimson Songbook, Volume One* receiving positive critical and popular reaction, the group recently set about recording *Volume Two*, which should be out by this summer.

Of *Volume One*, Wallace says he's particularly pleased with The Trio's take on "21st Century Schizoid Man." "The idea was to really take the whole thing apart," Ian explains. "We wanted to restructure it from start to finish so that it wasn't like the original in any way. To do that, we approached it as a ballad, with a piano introduction and very quiet brushes. Slowly the piece builds into the other sections and becomes a very straight-ahead 4/4 with some improvisation. I changed some of the chords and some of the harmonic ideas as well, to lean it more toward a jazz sensibility.

"We changed the feel on many of the tunes," Ian continues. "For instance, 'Cat Food' is done almost like a Coltrane medium blues. We really altered 'Red,' and we changed the time signature of 'Three Of A Perfect Pair' to seven. I'm really pleased with this direction. The music seems to lend itself to this kind of format."

Wallace has also recently produced a band called Fission Trip, for which he wrote some material, sang some of the songs, and played drums. And Ian is currently working on his second solo album, which he says will be a mishmash of some interesting influences.

For more info on Wallace, go to www.ianrwallace.com. For the latest on The Crimson Jazz Trio, go to www.crimsonjazztrio.com. **Robyn Flans**

Terri Lyne Carrington

Skill Set Personified

A jazz drumming phenomenon at the tender age of twelve, Terri Lyne Carrington has matured into an in-demand session pro who fluidly handles funk, jazz, rock, and soundtrack dates with equal grace. Her approach to session work, heard most recently on saxophonist Tineke Postma's *For The Rhythm* (Munich) and guitarist Paul Bollenbeck's *XXX*, is simple: Be on time, don't overplay, and always bring your own cymbals.

"After that, finding your own personality is something that happens with time," Carrington explains from LA. "I play so many styles, but a jazz date is where I have my own sound; on other sessions it can be different. Today I have a session with George Duke, and I'm not sure what the music will be. But in every session I will immediately suss out what the leader wants and what the composition needs."

Terri Lyne says she always underplays on sessions, based on her belief that less is more in the studio, where every note is under the microscope. Terri Lyne figures it's always better for the artist to ask you to play more, not less.

What makes for a bad session? "Somebody who has no idea what they want," Carrington replies. "I just did a session for a big English rock star. For one song I did three overdubs, played an eight-bar solo, and then copied a loop. That took a week. Seventeen mic's on the drums, four drumkits, and going back and forth between the kits to get the loop just right—I was pulling my hair out. The cost for the drum overdubs was as much as the entire budget of some jazz records I've recorded."

Terri Lyne's recent records include A. Ray Fuller's *The Weeper*, Marilyn Scott's *Handpicked*, *Blue Note Plays Sting* (various artists), and Rita Coolidge's *And So Is Love*, a testament to her ever-expanding skill set. Terri is also teaching at Berklee for the bulk of 2006 and is directing their summer music program, which awards scholarships to deserving high school students. She's also teaching private lessons, advanced chart reading classes, and various ensembles. **Ken Micallef**

Fall Out Boy's Andrew Hurley

"Our show is really physical. The guitarists and bassist spin and jump around. And I headbang and throw my arms up high for the whole show." That's Fall Out Boy drummer Andrew Hurley, describing his band's onstage performance, something he's quite familiar with. After all, the pop-punk band has embarked on a heavy road schedule, particularly since the release of its 2005 platinum-selling major-label debut, *From Under The Cork Tree*.

Hurley says that he scaled back some of his performances while tracking *Cork Tree*. "I let the songs breathe more than I have in the past," the drummer admits. "A lot of the bands I've worked with were metal bands, with very Slayer-ish fills played all over the place. With certain songs on this record, I needed to slow down a little and be bigger."

The Chicago-based Fall Out Boy, fueled by MTV and commercial radio airplay, hasn't had much of a chance to slow its hectic road routine. Hurley relates that it takes some time to adjust during each initial launch. "Touring for the first week after not playing for a little bit is pretty tough," he admits. "It takes a while to get the endurance back. But after that, I'm really good. I also work out, and I run, which helps."

Hurley also pays close attention to warming up his hands before a performance. "I do a lot of things to switch up my lead hand," he says, "because my left hand's a lot weaker than my right. I also stretch out my biceps, arms, legs, and fingers—especially my thumb, because if I don't the muscles between my thumb and index finger tighten up."

When we spoke to Hurley, his setup featured a C&C acrylic kit, with a 20x20 kick drum, a 9x12 rack tom, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 7x14 metal snare. The drummer clarifies, however, that he usually changes his drum sizes around with each new tour.

Fall Out Boy is embarking on its first-ever arena tour, and Hurley, who started touring in bands when he was sixteen during school breaks, couldn't be more excited. "This will be a new experience for all of us," he says. "It's crazy that we started off doing basement shows and now we're here. It's awesome." **Waleed Rashidi**

Phil Maturano

Afro-Cuban Inspired

Having relocated back to New York after living in Germany for several years, and with a recent instructional DVD out and projects that bring him to New York, LA, and Europe, Phil Maturano has a *lot* going on.

The drummer's recently released instructional DVD, *Afro-Cuban Drumming: An Overview For The Drumset*, has generated a lot of enthusiasm. Demonstrating how Afro-Cuban drumset patterns are an adaptation of more traditional percussion parts, and then showing them in different rhythm section contexts, Maturano successfully communicates not only the structure of the rhythms, but their underlying logic and how they can be applied. Some of it, Maturano says, is "stuff I learned getting yelled at on the job!"

Like many drummers, Maturano started by playing jazz and rock, and while he grew up with Latin music, he notes that it was "intimidating at first to decipher" what was going on. But an increasing love for the music pushed him forward, and upon finding playing opportunities and teachers, Maturano developed into a formidable Afro-Cuban set player.

Knowing the intimidation that can exist with Latin rhythms and believing that giving everyone access to the music will only further it, Maturano's new DVD clears away the mysteries for the interested player. Knowing how much there is to cover in Afro-Cuban music, the drummer chose to focus on the basics.

While discussing the DVD, the challenge of coordination, especially when incorporating left-foot clave, came up. "This technique is not showing off," says Maturano, who feels that the concept has been misunderstood. Explaining that the clave is a timeline, like 2 and 4 in jazz, Maturano relates that the key is to "understand the timeline and how it functions, and get to the point where you feel it and hear what goes over it viscerally. Thus it becomes not so much an independence issue, but a mental issue."

In addition to producing the DVD, Maturano has taught and written instructional books, and says he hopes to do some teaching in New York now that he's back in town. Check out www.philmaturano.com for more on this stellar player and teacher.

Martin Patmos

Nightmare Of You's Sammy Siegler

Sammy Siegler laughs when recalling his first gig at NYC's legendary club CBGBs with hardcore band Gorilla Biscuits. The drummer had to be chaperoned by his parents, since, at age twelve, he was under the club's "sixteen and over" age restriction. Schooled by his father and grandfather, who are both drummers, Siegler came up in New York's seminal hardcore scene. In his teens he recorded albums and toured the States and Europe with such influential acts as Side By Side and Youth Of Today.

"Growing up in Manhattan, I seemed to be one of the few drummers around," Sammy explains. "My dad had a moving business with a warehouse where we could practice. So I became 'the guy who played drums.'" After years of paying his indie-rock dues, Sammy graduated to major-label success as a member of CIV and Rival Schools.

Today Sammy rocks out behind the drumkit with Nightmare Of You, whose '80s-influenced pop has earned them favorable comparisons to The Killers and My Chemical Romance. "We do get compared to those bands," says Siegler. "That's cool, because we want to reach the masses and sell records. At the same time, we want to do things that are artistically groovy. The trick is finding that balance."

Asked how he adapted years of playing a hardcore thrash beat to the pop finesse required for Nightmare Of You, Sammy credits his exposure to many different musical styles. "I've played in a reggae band," the drummer says. "I also studied jazz with Chico Hamilton, who's a legend in many ways. That diversity has balanced the punk stuff, so I can bring a lot to the table."

Many of Sammy's signature chops are owed to the fact that he's left-handed playing on a right-handed kit. "That's how my dad played," Sammy offers. "I'd sit on his drums and play open-handed, because that felt comfortable. Later, when I'd play the really fast stuff, I couldn't get over to the ride cymbal on my right, so I moved it over by my hi-hat. Now if I want to ride on the floor tom, it's forced me to become a bit ambidextrous. There's form and technique, but ultimately whatever brings out your musicality is where it's at."

Gail Worley

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NEWS

Chad Gracey is on Live's new *Songs From Black Mountain*.

Goldfinger's **Darrin Pfeiffer** has started his own indie label called High 4 Records and will be releasing new CDs by Cauterize and Crush Luther. Check out www.high4records.com for more information.

Ernie Longoria is on The Accident Experiment's first full-length album, *United We Fear*, out in May.

Nathan Young is touring with Anberlin.

Omar Gongora is in the studio with Kinky, working on a new album geared for a summer release.

Fifteen-year-old **Jamie Eblen** is the drummer for a new musical *13*, produced by The Center Theater Group.

Longineu Parsons III is on the new Yellowcard album, *Lights And Sounds*.

Taku Hirano and **Jimmy Paxson** are on tour with Stevie Nicks.

Adolfo Lazo is on *The Double Cross*, the latest release from Tempest.

Tom Teasley has a new CD, *The Soul Dances*.

Tony Braunagel recently produced Eric Burdon's *The Soul Of A Man*.

MD scribe **Mike Haid** rocks out on the latest from Southern Gentlemen, *Third Time Is The Charm*.

Andy Newmark is on David Gilmour's latest, *On An Island*.

Darren Pujalet is on tour supporting Particle's new DVD.

Hector Munoz is on Alejandro Escovedo's CD, *The Boxing Mirror*.

Veronica Bellino is playing dates with guitarist Rob Balducci.

George Lawrence (from George's Drum Shop) is back on tour with Poco. You can also catch George on the band's latest live CD, *Bareback At Big Sky*.

Chad "Chavo" Amborn is on tour with The Alrights. Look for their new CD, *High School,* to be released in the fall.

DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

Shelly Manne was born on 6/11/20.

Chick Webb passed away on 6/16/39, **Yogi Horton** on 6/8/87, **Tito Puente** on 6/1/00, and **Pistol Allen** on 6/31/02.

On 6/2/36, **Chick Webb** and his band record "Sing Me A Swing Song" featuring the great Ella Fitzgerald on vocals.

On 6/1/64, The Rolling Stones (with **Charlie Watts**) arrive in New York for their first US tour.

Aquarian drumheads is founded on 6/1/80.

On 6/1/92 Big Bang starts **Ahead** drumsticks.

Happy Birthday!

Remo Belli (Remo, Inc): 6/22/27

Vic Firth (timpanist): 6/2/30

James Gadson (R&B great): 6/17/39

Charlie Watts (Rolling Stones): 6/2/41

Bernard Purdie (R&B legend): 6/11/41

Mick Fleetwood (Fleetwood Mac): 6/24/42

Ian Paice (Deep Purple): 6/29/48

Frank Beard (ZZ Top): 6/11/49

Joey Kramer (Aerosmith): 6/21/50

Bun E. Carlos (Cheap Trick): 6/12/51

Peter Erskine (jazz great): 6/5/54

Doane Perry (Jethro Tull): 6/16/54

Charles Collins (R&B great): 6/21/54

Mickey Curry (Bryan Adams): 6/10/56

Chad Cromwell (sessions): 6/14/57

Zoro (independent): 6/13/62

Steve Shelley (Sonic Youth): 6/23/62

Jimmy Chamberlin (Smashing Pumpkins): 6/10/64

Eric Kretz (Stone Temple Pilots): 6/7/66

Ray Luzier (David Lee Roth, AOA): 6/14/70

MD Radio **To hear some of the artists mentioned in this month's *Update*, go to MD Radio at www.moderndrummer.com.**

Acrylic is more than just a statement in visual style: it's a statement in sound. **Starclassic Mirage** marks the return of acrylic shell drums to the **TAMA** line up and brings with it more than two decades of advanced drum building design and technology.

TAMA's Black Ice Mirage reflects the danger of nature,s glassy phenomenon and transforms it into a powerful study in acrylic percussion.

Starclassic Mirage available in Black Ice or Crystal Ice.

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DW Classics Series Drumset

What's New Can Look—And Sound—Old

by Robin Tolleson

KEY NOTES

- Drums and hardware have classic look
- Toms tune easily and have great tone
- Hardware is lightweight and strong
- Unique design + professional quality = high price tag

DW's new Classics kit is an ambitious attempt to be two things at once. On the one hand, it's designed to look, sound, and feel like a vintage kit from the big band era. On the other, it's made to DW's contemporary high-end drumkit standards, with many of today's creature comforts built in.

Keeping Up Appearances

The Classics kit features a bass drum–mounted cymbal stand, a retro-style "banana" rack tom mount, "stick chopper"–style hoops, a White Marine pearl finish, and lightweight, flush-base hi-hat, snare, and cymbal stands. So it certainly *looks* the part of a big band-era drumset.

It sounds the part, too. The shells are constructed with a $^{1}/_{36}$" outside ply of thin ribbon mahogany, a $^{3}/_{16}$" poplar ply, and then another $^{1}/_{36}$" ribbon mahogany ply on the inside. They're reinforced with 10-ply, $2^{1}/_{4}$"-wide maple hoops top and bottom.

Classics kits feature big band–style cymbal and tom mounts on the bass drum. This view shows the Buddy Rich Commemorative lugs and finish.

Besides adding weight and strength to the shells, the hoops are intended to slightly break up the flow of the sound waves inside the drum, for a positive tonal effect.

The thin mahogany/poplar shells are given what DW terms "vintage-style 'butter' bearing edges." As a result, the drums lean towards the big, wide-open, rumbling tonality of the 1930s and '40s. (They can easily be reined in to deliver more tightly defined "contemporary" tones if desired.)

Drum By Drum

When heard from close up, the 14x22 kick drum had warmth and presence. When heard from fifteen or twenty feet away, it really opened up, delivering a low-end punch to the sternum. (This kick makes one question why "modern" bass drums have that extra two to four inches of depth.) Out of the box, the drum offered a loose, fat sound—perfect for hip-hop or bebop. Tightening up the head a little bit achieved a punchier sound.

The Classics kit comes with a solid-shell maple snare drum, in the mold of vintage Radio Kings. At first, the $5^1/_2$x14 snare seemed a bit out of control (compared with the rest of the kit), with a loud, papery timbre. However, after a few days of tuning and playing it, I became quite happy with it. Striking the snare in the center produced a tight, crisp sound, with not too much body. Moving towards the rim got into a sonic area that I love: fatter, with more natural reverb and sustain. The cross-stick sound was average, if perhaps a little light, while rimshots produced a good bark.

The 8x12 mounted tom seemed the perfect size for this kit. With a little bit of time and tuning this drum became a joy to hit, with a big sound that had depth and crackle to go with a pure tone.

My favorite of all the toms was the 14x14 floor tom. That little cannon just *sang*, with great sustain. DW might have given the small floor tom less depth, but it wouldn't have had the same sweet tone.

The Classics kit would have plenty of punch for jazz without the 16x16 floor tom. But by adding that big second tom, DW opens more sonic possibilities, allowing the kit to "Sing Sing Sing" in the low ranges. (I couldn't resist.) Playing that 16x16 drum was almost like having a timpani down there at the end of my fills. DW's specially designed floor tom legs are thick and heavy, adding to the stability—and perhaps to the clear tone—of each drum.

Hardware

The hardware on the Classics kit generally supports DW's goal of vintage looks and sound. For example, the drum hoops feature rounded-over "ears," in the style of the old "stick chopper" hoops. The original stick choppers were made from brass, and they could easily get out of round. The Classics counterhoops are made of steel to avoid this problem.

The retro-designed "banana-style" tom mounting hardware allows for plenty of movement. The complex (and slightly awkward) series of connections should certainly allow you to get the drum where you want it. However, because of the curve of the bass drum mount, it's virtually impossible to securely mate the supplied memory collar with the tom holder—

The authentic sound of the Classics kit is due largely to its vintage-style mahogany/poplar shells with maple reinforcing hoops.

In another authentic touch, Classics drums feature "stick chopper" hoops. This snare is also from the Buddy Rich Commemorative version.

something to be aware of.

The 9100M throne is a simple but heavy-duty design, with a dense foam seat top that had very little "give." The kit is also equipped with DW's venerable 5000NX kick pedal, which is an efficient, lightweight, no-frills design, with a nylon strap drive.

The Classics kit has once again made me a fan of the bass drum–mounted cymbal holder. While its traditional purpose is to mount a ride cymbal, I find that there's simply no better place to put a splash. (I put my ride on a nearby floor stand, instead.)

Speaking of cymbal stands, the ones on the Classics kit are from DW's lightweight, flush-base 6000 series. The straight stand has a simple look that fits the Classics series perfectly. And it's plenty strong enough to carry the weight and sway of a 22" ride. The 6700 model features a disappearing, telescoping boom arm. This is an extremely versatile stand. Like its straight sibling, the 6700 has memory collars, which, when engaged, create an attractive metal raised relief of the DW logo.

The tilter on each cymbal stand is controlled by a plastic lever, which makes for fast, convenient adjustments, with less stress on the fingers than wing nuts cause. Once the cymbal is set in its proper position, that lever can be ratcheted around to get out of the way of a cymbal rebound or a stroke. My only concern is that getting banged around in a road case might damage the plastic lever.

The underside of the heel on the footboard of the 6500 hi-hat features metal teeth that dig into a carpet very effectively to prevent slippage. In addition, each leg has its own adjustable stud for further security. It takes a little time to maneuver this thing into place on a carpet, what with all the grips and studs. But it's worth it in order to have secure hold on the floor once you do get it in position.

As "smart" as the 6000 series cymbal stands are, the best thing about them might be their light weight, which I would estimate to be a third less than the medium-duty stands I usually use, and half that of common, double-braced stands. I do have to admit that I had a few funny moments trying to maneuver the hi-hat and cymbal stands into place, since *all* their legs are flat on the floor. A mix of flush-base and tripod stands would make for easier stand positioning (although it would, admittedly, blow the pure "vintage" look).

In Conclusion

There's a lot to like about the DW Classics kit. Common-sense tuning of the DW factory heads got the toms to sound pretty awesome in a short period of time. Some might say the kick sounds "floppy," but that could be altered with tuning and muffling.

The snare sounded bright and responsive. If it were my drum, I'd try to warm it up a tad with a different head for an even more "vintage" sound. The hardware fits the set perfectly: lightweight, simple, and durable, with classic flush-to-floor legs. And the kit has an authentic vintage look.

But is it worth $6,500, not including hardware? That's a tough question. Collectors may consider it an attractive investment. Purists may buy it for its classic look and playability. I'm skeptical, however, that working drummers will be eager to go into hock for it. On the other hand, the DW brand appeal is strong, and the Classics kit *does* have unique acoustic qualities to recommend it.

As they say in drumming, time will tell.

THE NUMBERS

DW Classics five-piece shell pack **$6,556**

Includes an 8x12 rack tom, 14x14 and 16x16 floor toms, a 14x22 bass drum, and a 5½x14 solid-maple snare. A four-piece Classics shell pack (9x13 rack, 16x16 floor, 14x24 bass, and 5½x14 solid snare) lists for $5,526. Drums feature DW's turret lugs and Classic White Marine FinishPly covering.

A Buddy Rich Commemorative version featuring a 9x13 rack tom, one 16x16 floor (with an optional add-on second 16x16), a 14x24 bass drum, and a solid-maple 5½x14 solid snare is also available. It comes with vintage-style lugs and Vintage Marine FinishPly covering.

6000 Series Hardware

Straight cymbal stand	$99.99
Boom cymbal stand	$116.99
Hi-Hat stand	$179.99
Snare stand	$116.99

5000NX nylon strap drive bass drum pedal **$165.99**

9100M drum throne **$233.99**

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< FEATURES

DW 9000 SERIES PEDALS feature a free-floating Infinite Adjustable Cam, allowing the pedal to be easily set from Accelerator to Turbo Drive or anywhere in-between. In combination with the standard state-of-the-art ball-bearing hinge, the 9000 pedals' near-silent action becomes virtually frictionless. Available in single and double models, DW 9000 Series pedals are nothing less than professional grade.

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dw 9000 SERIES PEDALS

WWW.DWDRUMS.COM

Meinl Soundcaster Custom Series

Shine On, Shine On

by Chap Ostrander

KEY NOTES

- Overall line has musicality and warmth
- Thin crashes are particularly sweet and versatile
- Mega Bell ride has more character than one would expect

Meinl's Soundwave hi-hats feature bottom cymbals with scalloped edges to prevent airlock.

Meinl has taken their popular Soundcaster cymbal series and kicked it up a notch. The cymbals still feature Meinl's B12 alloy (88% copper and 12% tin), so nothing is taken away from the bright, musical sound that the line is noted for. But Meinl found that they could enhance the warmth and response of the cymbals by adding a brilliant finish. So Soundcaster Customs are polished by a computer-controlled multi-step process. Let's see what the outcome is.

Hi-Hats

The Soundcaster Custom 14" medium hats were nice and warm. I was comfortable with their sound from the outset. They also offered great stick response, and I could pull out as much sound as I wanted or needed.

The 14" medium Soundwave hats (with a scalloped-edge bottom cymbal that prevents airlock) were definitely sharper and more cutting than their standard counterparts. The "chick" sound was also much more up front.

The Soundcaster Custom 14" Powerful hats are very well named. Their heavy weight gave them great stick response, and the pairing of the top and heavy bottom cymbals produced a voice with lots of cut. As with the medium hats, the Soundwave pair had a more aggressive "chick."

All of the hi-hat models performed well, within the parameters that their weight and design would indicate. The demands of your gig would determine which model you'd want to go for.

Crashes

The Soundcaster Custom line includes 16" and 18" thin crashes. I took them to a gig that required both power and subtlety. I needed to insert explosive accents played with a stick, plus use mallets for sustained cymbal rolls. The thin crashes spoke with great beauty. They were both exceedingly warm and rich in voice.

Because I liked the thin crashes so much, I initially thought that I might have a hard time liking the medium-weight crashes as well. Man, was I wrong. These cymbals (in 14", 15", 16", 17", and 18" sizes) just *sang*. Their medium weight enhanced stick definition, allowing me to use the crashes for punching accents in quick succession. Each cymbal size had a distinct tone and pitch, with the larger sizes naturally having slightly deeper and more robust voices. When I used mallets on them, the crash sound appeared quickly, and then faded rapidly.

The 18", 19", and 20" Powerful crashes were an eye- and ear-opening experience for me. I usually find large crashes to be cumbersome and "clanky." Such was not the case here. The cymbals sounded huge, and I'm confident that they could hold their own at high volumes. Their pitches deepened as the size increased, and they were thick enough to sustain a ride pattern. I also tried building up rolls with mallets. Whew! You'd need ear protection with these guys.

20" Rides

The 20" medium ride was delightful. It had everything from great stick definition to a clear and cutting bell. It also possessed all the warmth of any ride I've played. The sonic response was full but under control.

The 20" Powerful ride was much more outspoken, with a higher voice than its medium counterpart. It also produced strong stick response. It gave the impression that it would cut through any style or volume of music.

Just because I'm curious (inquiring minds want to know!), I set up the two 20" rides and the 20" Powerful crash side by side. I wanted to make sure that each one actually did the job it was designed to do. As I struck the cymbals, their qualities and natures emerged true to form. There was no mistaking what I was playing. You could do this in the dark with unlabeled cymbals and still get it right.

22" Mega Bell Ride

Yeow. "Mega Bell" hardly covers it. You could see this thing coming across a stadium. An unbelievable bell sound pours from this monster. It's as piercing and loud as you'd expect, but it's also very much under control.

Overall, the Mega Bell ride had lots of definition, and *great* stick response. It is big and bad, and will cut through brick walls. Unleash it in a big space.

Splash And China Models

It's *so* nice to work with splash cymbals that are thin instead of feeling (and sounding) like steel plates. It was very refreshing to use the Soundcaster Custom splashes in conjunction with the crashes, as well as for accents and the usual choked sounds that I use in shows. The 8" sounded high and glassy; the 10" was warmer and darker. (A 12" Distortion splash that we didn't receive for review has been added to the line.)

Meanwhile, the 18" China cymbal was like fire on a stand. It had a very quick response for accents, yet it also had a dark undercurrent that led me to consider riding on it. Given its thin nature, I didn't get the stick response as with thicker models, but the sound was well worth it. When I tried mallets on it, it just kept burning hotter.

Wrap-Up

Meinl really did its homework with the Soundcaster Customs. They do exactly what they're supposed to do. Meinl's ads say that the cymbals are best suited for hard rock, country, and punk. While I agree that they'd certainly be outstanding in those situations, I found that their warmth made them appropriate for *any* gig.

This is the line with shine. Grab some sunglasses and check 'em out.

The bell on the Mega Bell ride lives up to its name, but is still surprisingly controllable.

THE NUMBERS

8" splash	$156
10" splash	$180
12" Distortion splash	$240
14" medium and Powerful hi-hats	$484
14" medium and Powerful Soundwave hi-hats	$534
14" medium crash	$242
15" medium crash	$282
16" thin and medium crash	$320
17" medium crash	$346
18" thin, medium, and Powerful crash	$380
19" Powerful crash	$414
20" Powerful crash	$440
18" China	$380
20" medium and Powerful ride	$440
22" Mega Bell ride	$540

(615) 227-5090, www.meinlcymbals.com.

Pro-Mark Accessories

Going Beyond Drumsticks

by Will Romano

KEY NOTES

- Cymbal bags have outstanding design features
- Grip Peddlers improve playing comfort
- Drum Gum muffling material is effective and durable
- Groove Juice Jr. has limited applications

Pro-Mark is best known as one of the world's leading manufacturers of drumsticks. But the company also takes a drummer-friendly attitude when it comes to offering additional helpful accessory items. Here's a quick look at four such products designed to make a drummer's life easier or more comfortable.

Professional Cymbal Bags

The CC20 (back pack bag) and CC30 (deluxe roller bag) are made of durable Cordura material. They're felt-lined and water-resistant, and they feature six pouches designed to separate and protect cymbals. My 22" ride fit snuggly into the large compartment. A set of 14" hi-hats virtually disappeared inside one of the other pouches, assuring me that there would be no scratching or damage in transport.

The CC20 has padded back straps, reinforced handles, a stick-bag clip, an address/name tag, one deep front zipper pouch, a smaller zippered pouch, and a reinforced beveled bottom. The contoured surface of the bag made transporting the bag easier than if I were carrying it by hand.

The CC30 has the same design features as the CC20, with the added bonus of "rollability." It features a luggage-style pullout handle that's easy to operate, and it stands upright on its two wheels and two hard-plastic footings. It also has a Cordura flap for body protection if used as a backpack. When I tested it on the job, the CC30 maintained its balance even as it navigated changes in floor heights.

The CC20 ($129.95) and CC30 ($189.95) are designed to slip into overhead storage bins of commercial airliners. These are simply some of the best, most multifaceted cymbal bags you'll ever use.

Grip Peddlers

Grip Peddlers are shock-absorbent, stick-on footboard pads designed to decrease pedal vibration while improving the comfort level of your playing. They come in Sole Smooth, FunkBump Grid, FunkBump Smooth, and Multi-Grid versions.

I placed the FunkBump Grid and the Multi Grid (no bump) on my kick and hi-hat pedal, respectively. The FunkBump Grid is marked by a matrix of squares on its surface, with a lump right around where your toes begin. I didn't immediately feel the effects of the Peddlers, and thought it would be best to remove my shoes and play in socks. Upon doing so, I felt a dramatic improvement in feel and comfort level. The matrix contributed to a tactile playing experience I had never had before. (The square grips clung to my socks, making my playing more consistent and more focused.)

The grip "put bounce in my step," so to speak. And irritation due to the "dig-in factor"—which manifests from grinding motions of shoe, sock, or flesh against metal—was reduced, despite continuous and repetitive motion.

When I wanted to change Peddlers, I wondered: Would the adhesive-backed grips come off easily? Could I remove them without destroying them, or my pedals? In fact, the grips could be taken off with a small amount of effort, and with little effect on the integrity of the adhesive. Obviously, a reusable, stick-on product will eventually wear out after a period of time. The durability you'll experience with the Peddlers depends on the model you choose and whether you wear shoes or socks (or play barefoot).

When I switched to the Sole Smooth grips on my bass drum pedal, their gliding feel made them excellent for heel-down kick-pedal playing. When I put a FunkBump Smooth on my hi-hat pedal, the ridge it created on the footboard gave me a push-off and timing tool to play with more power and ease. In short, Grip Peddler pads are built for comfort *and* speed.

Playing with Grip Peddlers makes it difficult to place your foot on an ordinary metal footboard again. While they might look like the drummer's equivalent of Dr. Scholl's pads, your feet will thank you for using them.

Drum Gum

Drum Gum is made from materials developed in the aerospace industry. These gummy strips (3" long and about 1" wide) have the feel of Silly Putty and the look of gooey purple sticks of chewing gum. They offer a quick and effective way to cut down on unwanted drum ring, without completely deadening your sound.

I placed Drum Gum strips on the top and bottom heads of my toms, in various configurations. They kept the natural ringing and high-pitched overtones of the drums well in check. What I sacrificed in tone, I gained in a warm, throaty response. The Drum Gum strips showed no signs of peeling off, even if I played directly on them. (Incidentally, playing on the strips themselves produced a kind of ultra-dampened tone.)

To see how Drum Gum strips dampen the sound on other percussion instruments, I put one strip on the plastic ridge and two on the metal body of an LP Rock Ridge Rider cowbell. This resulted in a soft, muffled bell sound. Then I tried the strips on a large conga, as well as on a doumbek. In each case, the essential and characteristic deep tones were all present, without lingering higher overtones.

Products of this type usually have a short lifespan. But no matter how often I applied and removed the Drum Gum strips from drumheads and other surfaces, they retained their stickiness, shape, and integrity. The strips come three to a package.

Groove Juice Jr.

Pro-Mark distributes the original Groove Juice spray cymbal and hardware cleaner. Groove Juice Jr. is a less-aggressive version specifically designed for "budget" cymbals and drum hardware.

I applied GJ Jr. to a tiny splash cymbal that I had sitting around from years ago. I followed the label's directions and refrained from rubbing the liquid into the cymbal surface. Instead, I let it seep in for approximately one minute. Then I rinsed the cymbal and patted it dry. After a minute or two, I saw a marked improvement in the overall shine and complexion of the cymbal. However, I also noticed that a slight discoloration that had been masked by grime was now fully exposed.

Next I sprayed an A Zildjian splash that showed signs of oxidation around the edges. While the cymbal didn't revert to "like-new" condition, a shine did emerge. On the other hand, after I used the GJ Jr. on a 12" China, the cymbal looked better than it had in years.

So my results were mixed. In all fairness, however, some of the cymbals I chose to clean couldn't be categorized as "budget" models. I think the best thing about Groove Juice Jr. is that it doesn't erase a cymbal's logo, even upon repeat usage, as other, more stringent cleaners do.

I next tried GJ Jr. (diluted with three parts water, as directed) on a variety of drum stands and hardware. It definitely made the metal glisten. When I asked Pro-Mark how GJ Jr. differs from any normal cleaning product that I could buy in the supermarket, I was emphatically assured that neither the original Groove Juice nor the Jr. version "bears any resemblance chemically to Windex or similar products."

Groove Juice Jr. has a pungent and penetrating odor, so it should definitely be used in a well-ventilated area. Despite its smell, it's not a *strong* cleaner, and is best suited for low-cost and starter cymbals. The directions should be followed carefully—especially about not letting the liquid dry on the surfaces of cymbals or hardware.

THE NUMBERS

CC20 backpack cymbal bag	$129.95
CC30 deluxe roller bag	$189.95
Grip Peddler pedal grips	$19.95
Drum Gum (per package of 3)	$9.95
Groove Juice Jr. (per bottle)	$9.95

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Roland RMP-5 Rhythm Trainer

Teacher In A Box

by Russ Barbone

Roland's RMP-5 Rhythm Trainer is a very clever combination electronic practice pad and coaching assistant. Its one-piece molded body contains the playing pad and the electronic brain. That brain contains over fifty onboard PCM sounds, including several snare sounds, cymbals, and other percussion effects. The metronome function has twenty-four rhythm types, as well as twenty-four different kinds of beats (including compound times). An LCD display constantly feeds visual clues back to the user, while a small internal speaker projects the metronome sound.

KEY NOTES

- Well thought-out functions
- Well built, with sleek looks
- Mini output jack should be replaced by a standard $^1/_4$" jack

Construction Details

The compact unit ($10^1/_2$" wide by $13^1/_2$" high) resembles a standard practice pad. The base has a threaded receiver that permits cymbal-stand mounting. Roland also sells an optional PDS-2 stand separately.

The 8" playing surface features a replaceable mesh pad with a sensor underneath, as is found on many of Roland's electronic drumkits. The pad is shipped with the mesh fabric de-tensioned in order to avoid any stretching before actual use. So before it can be played it must be "tuned up," using eight lugs.

On the side of the RMP-5 are jacks for an optional DC power adapter, an on/off switch, a mix input, and an external trigger. The mix-in and audio-output jacks are mini types, while the trigger uses a $^1/_4$" jack.

Form And Function

The RMP-5 includes Roland's very cool Rhythm Coach program. It's designed to challenge drummers with various tests, much like a personal teacher would do. These tests include time checks, stroke balance, sticking techniques, accuracy scoring, quiet count (for developing solid tempo), and auto up/down speed indications (to develop stamina and endurance). The unit also provides a visual display of the student's progress, using both the LCD display and the audible metronome. It's also possible to send the metronome's audio signal to an instrument amplifier via a stereo mini output jack on the side of the unit.

A dual trigger input allows the connection of Roland's KD-8 kick and CY-8 cymbal pads. This enables the user to play complete grooves along with the RMP-5's internal rhythms, or with external audio sources like a CD player. The RMP-5 brain supplies the sounds for each pad connected.

Getting To Know The Teacher

The RMP-5 takes some time to get used to. (I found it helpful to keep the well-written owner's manual nearby for quick reference.) But once you get the hang of it, you quickly realize that this unit will, indeed, challenge you—and will very likely make you a better drummer.

The metronome, Rhythm Coach, and accuracy-score modes are very helpful. The auto up/down mode will push you to achieve greater speed and accuracy. The stroke balance mode shows you whether your left- and right-hand strokes are even in terms of attack pressure, which will help you to develop dynamic control. Mistakes are immediately displayed.

I have only two complaints with the RMP-5. The first is that the internal speaker is small and limited in volume. The acoustic sound of sticks on the pad sometimes made it hard to hear the metronome. A much better scenario is to use the unit's audio output connected to a small external amplifier or headphones. Which leads me to my second complaint: The output jack is a stereo mini type, so in most cases you'll need a stereo mini to stereo $^1/_4$" adapter to go to an amplifier. I think Roland should switch to a standard $^1/_4$" output jack for this function on future models.

Final Grade

The RMP-5 is a sleek and well-built tool full of instructive and innovative features. I'm confident that it will improve your practice sessions, challenge you, and drive you to attain a higher drumming plateau. Highly recommended.

THE NUMBERS

RMP-5 Rhythm Trainer **$279**
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BECAUSE SOUND MATTERS

PHOTO: NEIL ZLOZOWER

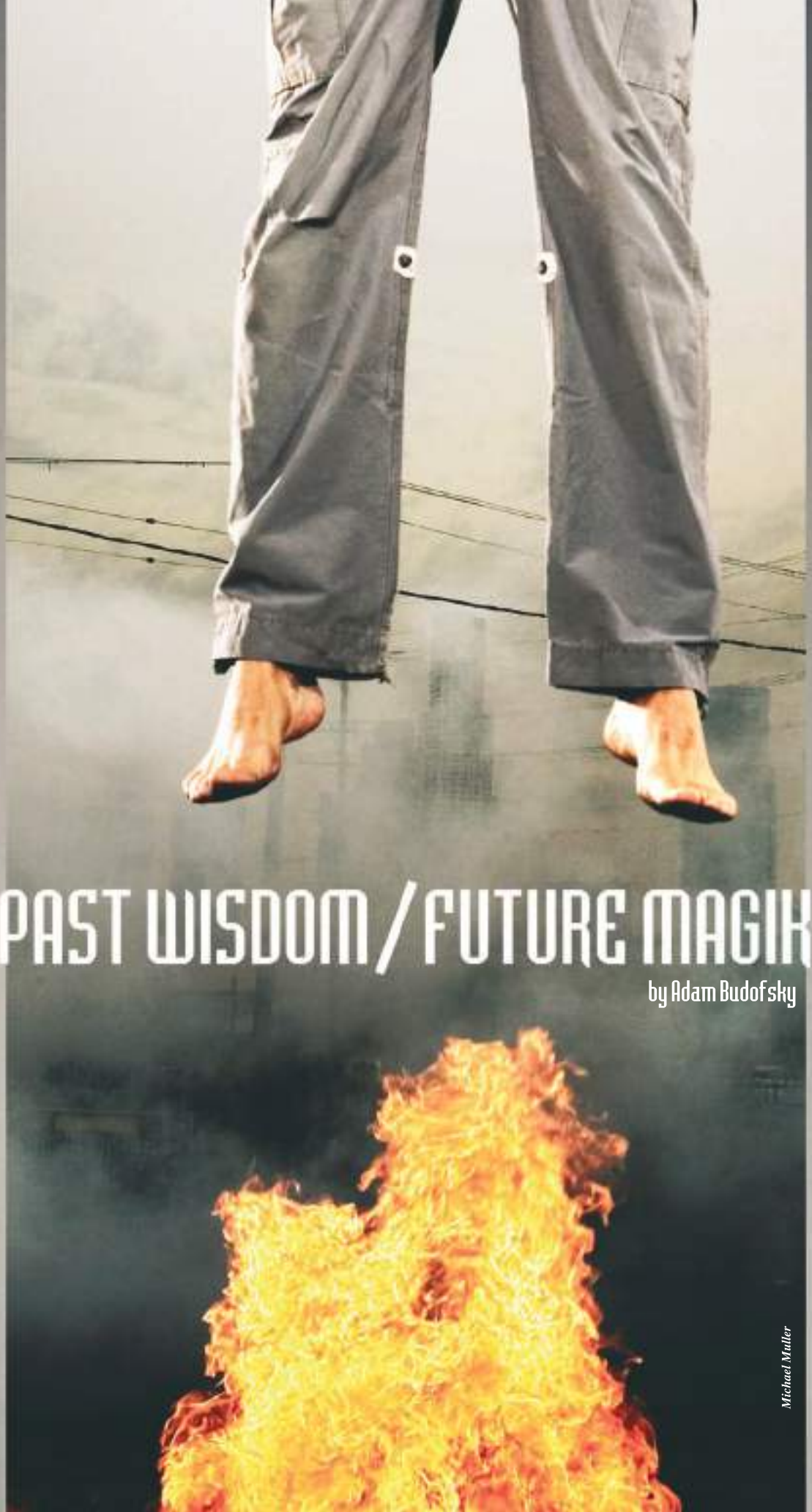
THE RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS'
CHAD SMITH

Most bands who tough it out for twenty years in the modern music industry would be happy getting the occasional video on MTV2 and playing mid-size summer tours. Being able to demand top-notch support from their label, automatic interest from the press, and rabid fandom from the public...well, that's a rarefied position indeed.

Not only do The Red Hot Chili Peppers fall squarely in that second group, they've retained their artistic integrity and sheer creative edge along the way. This was made abundantly clear to *Modern Drummer* this past January, when Chili Peppers drummer Chad Smith invited us into his home to listen to a batch of songs from their upcoming album, *Stadium Arcadium*. If the tracks we heard were any indication—and there's no reason to believe they're not—this album is going to be a monster.

PAST WISDOM / FUTURE MAGIK

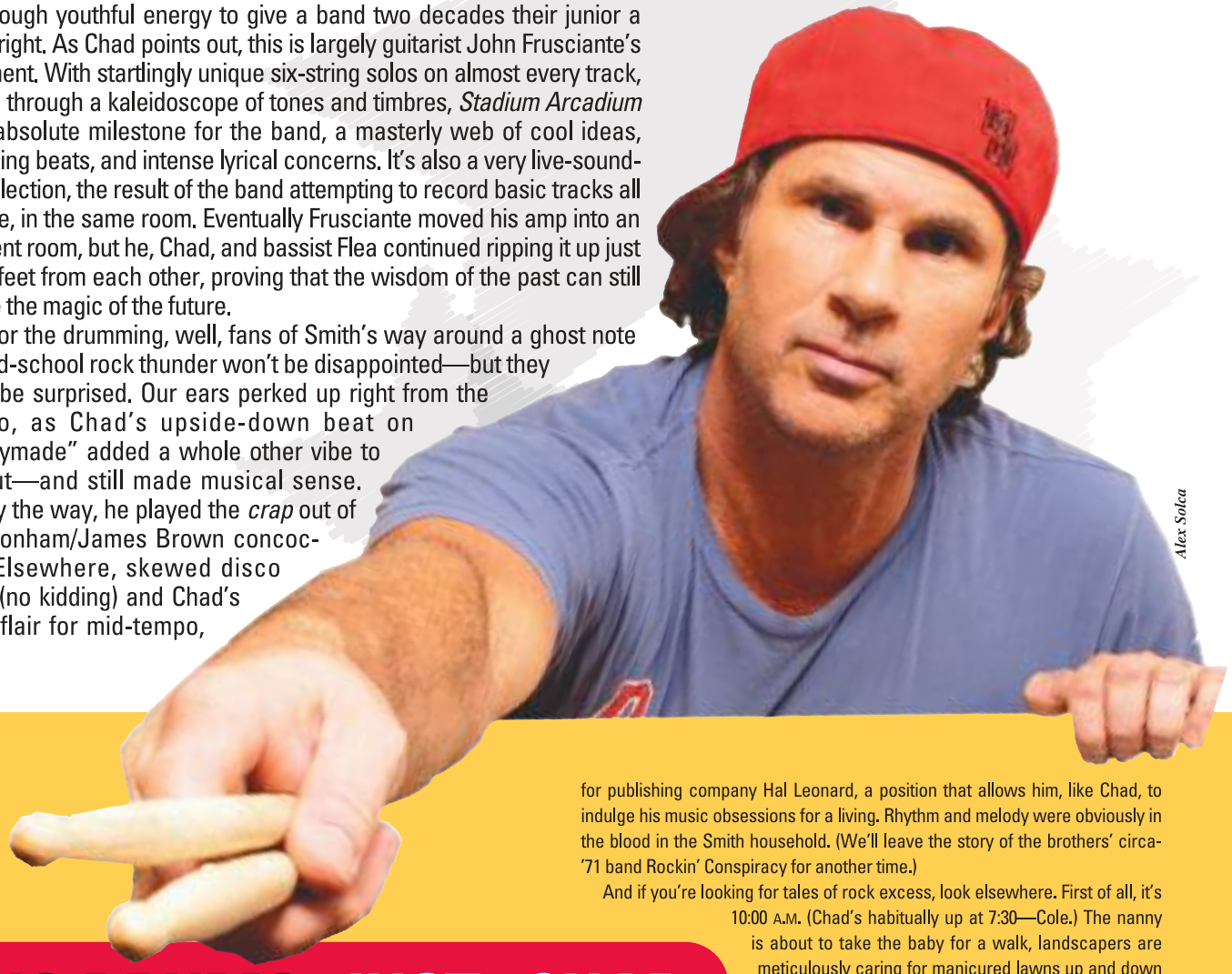
by Adam Budofsky



Michael Muller

Spread across two discs and twenty-eight songs, the Chili Peppers' new opus shows a band maturing in all the right ways—and retaining enough youthful energy to give a band two decades their junior a good fright. As Chad points out, this is largely guitarist John Frusciante's statement. With startlingly unique six-string solos on almost every track, played through a kaleidoscope of tones and timbres, *Stadium Arcadium* is an absolute milestone for the band, a masterly web of cool ideas, slamming beats, and intense lyrical concerns. It's also a very live-sounding collection, the result of the band attempting to record basic tracks all at once, in the same room. Eventually Frusciante moved his amp into an adjacent room, but he, Chad, and bassist Flea continued ripping it up just a few feet from each other, proving that the wisdom of the past can still inspire the magic of the future.

As for the drumming, well, fans of Smith's way around a ghost note and old-school rock thunder won't be disappointed—but they might be surprised. Our ears perked up right from the get-go, as Chad's upside-down beat on "Readymade" added a whole other vibe to the cut—and still made musical sense. And by the way, he played the *crap* out of that Bonham/James Brown concoction. Elsewhere, skewed disco beats (no kidding) and Chad's usual flair for mid-tempo,



Alex Solca

NO DRUMS, JUST...CHAD

You can learn a lot about a musician by checking out the non-musical elements of his life: where and how he lives, the videos sitting on shelves in his TV room, the people he likes to spend time with. This past January, *MD* got to hang with Chad Smith for a few hours at his LA home, an old Spanish-style mansion once inhabited, like many in his neighborhood, by Hollywood royalty.

Actually, using the word "mansion" is probably misleading. Though it's certainly a large, gorgeous building with cool sunken rooms, lots of tile, stained-glass windows, and beautifully framed photographs of Chad's heroes like Ginger Baker, the vibe is definitely groovy and unassuming. First off, band and recording equipment fills the main living room and another large room nearby, the result of Chad's suggestion that ex-Deep Purple singer and close friend Glenn Hughes record his new album here, in a relaxed setting and without outlandish studio fees.

Then there's Chad himself: unshaven, wearing a worn-out Red Wings T-shirt, and obviously happy to be off the road and spending time with his wife, Nancy, and their year-old son, Cole. Chilling in his family room, listening to tracks from the new Chili Peppers album, provides the perfect opportunity to check out Chad's video collection, which mostly consists of music DVDs (leaning toward classic rock) and recent feature films. Though the house is neat, some books and toys lie about. A child's xylophone even comes in handy as a prop when Chad describes his first big percussion overdub, a simple bell part on "21st Century" that he, charmingly, can't seem to conceal his pride over.

At one point Chad's brother, Brad, comes up in conversation. Chad's close with his brother and clearly cherishes his friendship. Brad, incidentally, works for publishing company Hal Leonard, a position that allows him, like Chad, to indulge his music obsessions for a living. Rhythm and melody were obviously in the blood in the Smith household. (We'll leave the story of the brothers' circa-'71 band Rockin' Conspiracy for another time.)

And if you're looking for tales of rock excess, look elsewhere. First of all, it's 10:00 A.M. (Chad's habitually up at 7:30—Cole.) The nanny is about to take the baby for a walk, landscapers are meticulously caring for manicured lawns up and down the street, and during cigarette breaks on the front steps, Chad waves and exchanges pleasantries with neighbors passing by his gate.

One imagines Chad's neighbors are quite unaware of the Chili Peppers' mad-men-of-rock reputation. But Chad's graciousness is no act. Though in the past he's not shied away from the wild life rock stardom brings, Smith is still one of the warmest, funniest, and most accommodating interviewees a drum journalist—or rock fan—could hope to meet. He even insists we take the Keith Moon bio he recently finished reading, probably knowing it'll be a while before he gets it back (if ever…sorry in advance, Chad). More than that, though, Smith accommodates us by answering a few questions that no big-time star should have to suffer through. But inquiring minds deserve some froth, and like we said up top, sometimes the little details of one's life can be mildly revealing. You be the judge.

So, Chad, what's your favorite place to play?

It's really where I have friends, and where the audiences are good. The Irish are great—so passionate and funny—and they have good beer. And they really love us, so we play there a lot. I enjoy Dublin too. South America is also crazy. The audiences are incredible, and there are interesting places to visit. And the Japanese are completely different from anywhere else, funny in their own way. Australia is great too.

Place to eat?

Sushi. But there's an Italian place in Brentwood, Peppone. It's awesome, my favorite place. When I get back in town, that's where I go.

digging-in-the-dirt snare/kick/hat explosions bring back the old heat. At one point we turned to see Chad, sitting on his family-room rug, eyes closed, head-rocking along to the music like a kid deep in sleep, dreaming of being on stage with Led Zeppelin in Madison Square Garden. Two seconds later, we noticed we were head-rocking too and didn't even realize it. *That's* what music is supposed to do.

The secret to the Chili Peppers' success is really no mystery at all. When real artists get together to make noise in the spirit of brotherhood, communication, and truth-seeking, amazing things can happen. The individuals in this band have certainly gone through some heavy stuff, and they are definitely not the people they once were. But they've retained their respect for each other, and haven't let stardom deplete their well of real old-fashioned inspiration.

Chad has added to his own suitcase of musical ideas by continuing his interest in playing on projects outside of the Chili Peppers. Notably, he's been acting as home-studio owner/drummer/producer on ex-Deep Purple singer Glenn Hughes' new album. In fact, we can hear Glenn in the next room doing vocal overdubs as we conduct the interview. Perhaps even more telling, Chad also recently finished recording the new Dixie Chicks disc. Smith might have been called in to "just be himself" on the neo-country superstars' latest offering, as producer Rick Rubin assured him, but you *know* he left that whole situation with some interesting new experiences and skills.

We begin our interview wondering if Chad is aware of his particular strengths as a drummer, and what he feels he brings to new musical situations….

Tony Wollliscroft

Favorite car?

The '65 Mustang fastback, which I own, followed closely by the '67 Corvette Stingray, which I don't. My dad was a Ford man for thirty-two years, and I thought the fastback Mustang was the coolest-looking car. The first check that I got, even before *Mother's Milk* came out, I used to buy that car. This was in 1989. So I've had it for seventeen years—same car.

Motorcycle?

I'm an avid cyclist. My main mode of transportation is a 2003 Harley Davidson Soft Tail, 100th Anniversary issue. And in Mexico I cruise around on a Road King, which is a bigger bike.

Favorite team?

The Detroit Red Wings! I'm very loyal to my Detroit teams.

Chad: Well, I wouldn't say I'm really good at anything. [laughs] I do feel that I have my thing I do, my own style I guess you could say. Before, I would try to change my style depending on who I was playing with. I still do that a little, like with Glenn Hughes: "I can get some of my Keith Moon in there!" When I do that I feel like I'm overplaying, but he's like, "No, I love it," so I must be making him happy. And those are my roots.

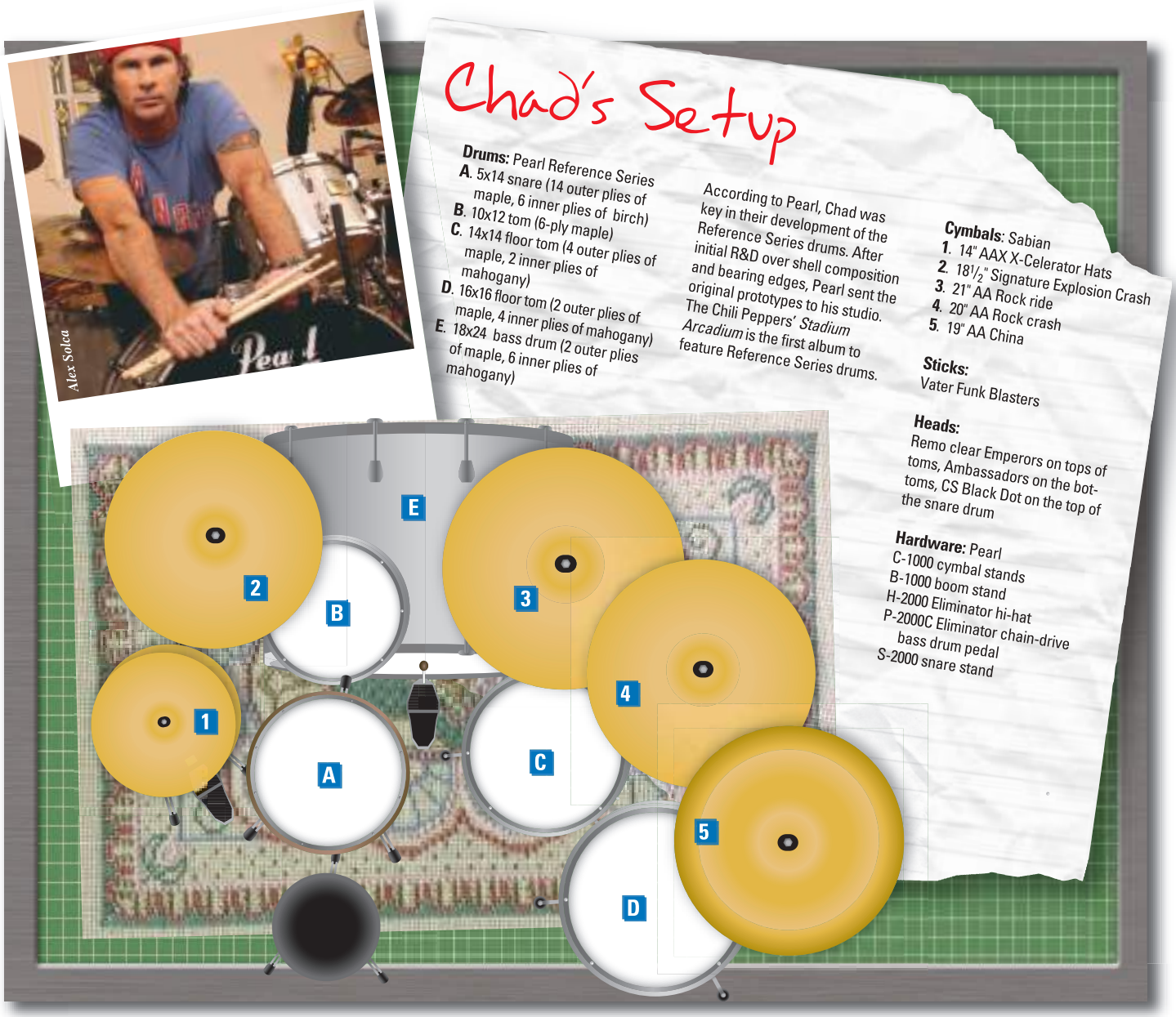
But I found it interesting going from the Chili Peppers record to the Dixie Chicks record, which I did right after. It's completely different music, but that's when I noticed that I kind of have this thing I do. It's clean—not clinically precise, but I try to hit hard, play with dynamics, and play to the song—though that's probably just from years of playing and trying to be a good musician.

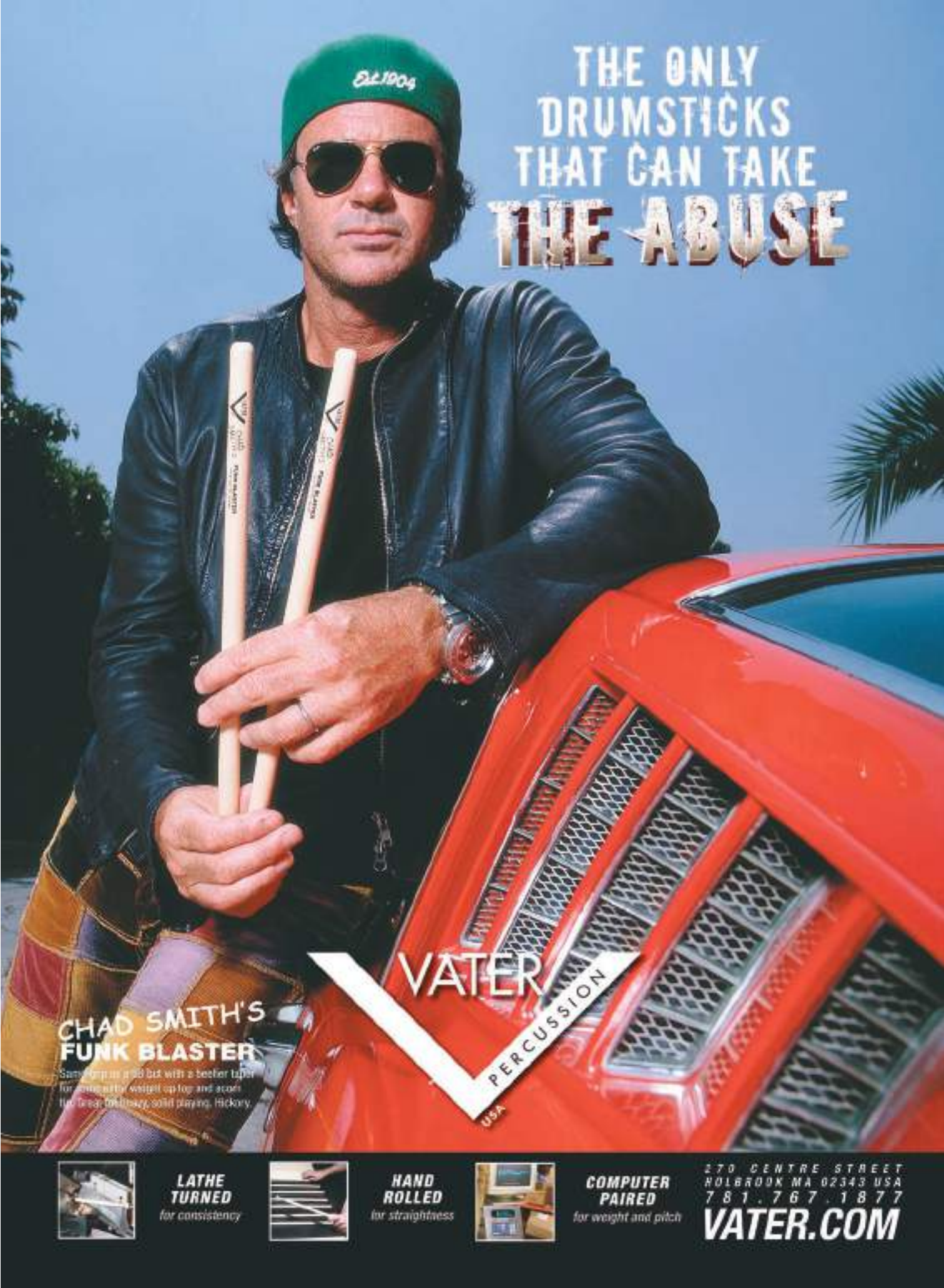
The other thing is recording: I used to listen back to takes and one would be good and the other three would be all over the place, whether it's the time, or playing the wrong thing, or getting red light fever—playing nothing like you play, or not being in the moment. I don't feel nervous anymore. I'm no Jim Keltner—not every take sounds like a record—but I do think I'm getting better. I used to cringe years ago. There's some stuff on *Mother's Milk*…I loudly strike up a conversation with somebody when that thing comes on. [laughs] "So! Did you see that game?!" But I'm getting more consistent in that way.

MD: Is it also about understanding what you want to get across on a song, rather than simply, "I'm in a rock band, so I need to rock"?

Chad: Absolutely. It could be about changing the sound. Like this song we were doing yesterday: Hearing the song before I played anything on it, it sounded like a Beatle-y, Ringo-ish thing. I'm not going to sound like Ringo—nobody does—but I might put more dampening on the drums, or change to a bigger snare drum, because I felt that the song would benefit from that sound. And it kind of makes you play differently when you change things. Part of this is about engineering, but some of it comes from you.

So that's a big part of it now: being sensitive to what you think, and to the artist as well. The drums are such an important part of the song. You have to play with confidence. You have to *own* the drums, man. Because if you're unsure about things, the mic' will pick that up. If you make a mis-

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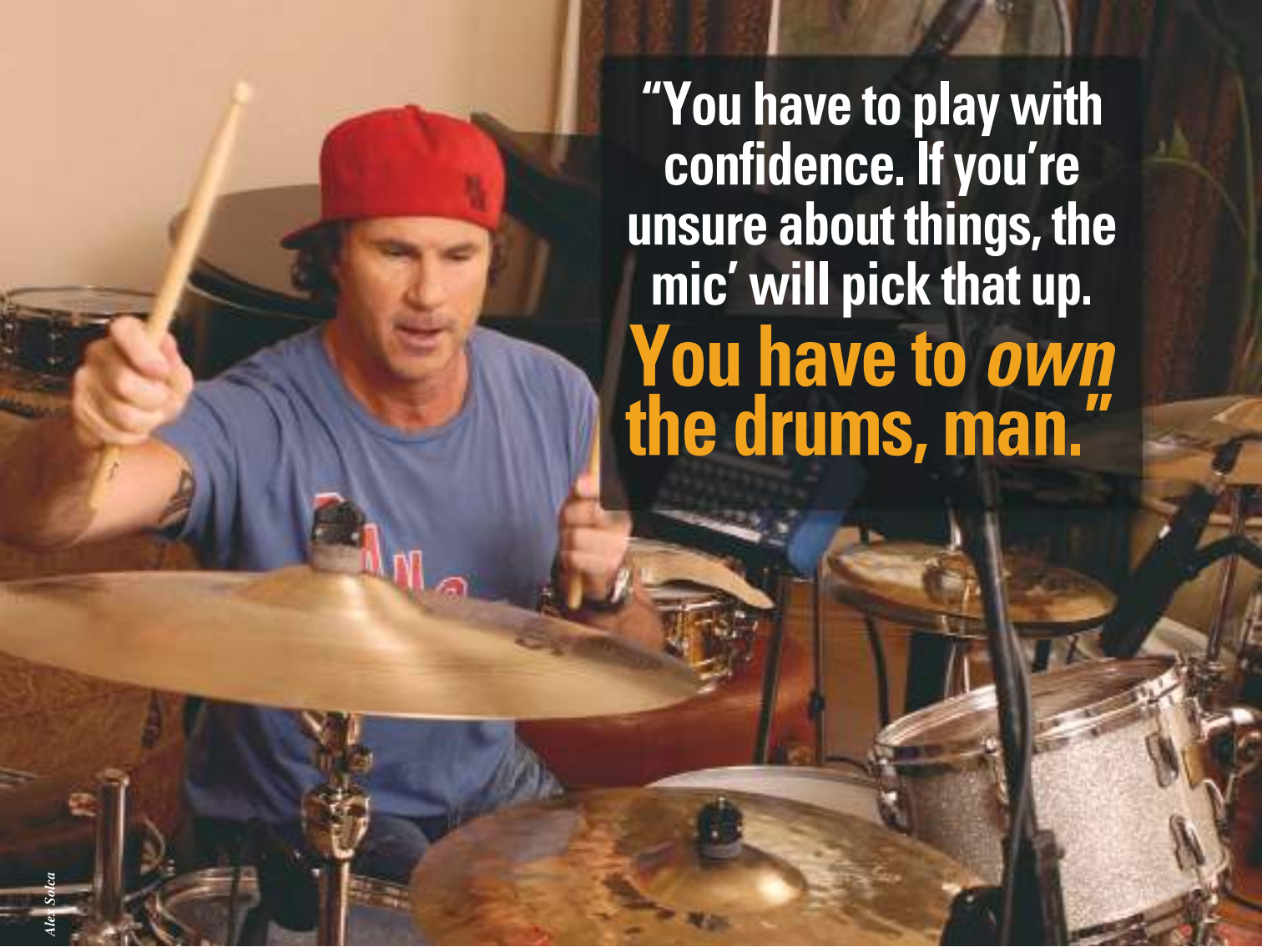

Alex Solca

take, make it big! If you're a bear, be a grizzly on that mistake. If I mess up, I do it twice. Now it's a *part*. [laughs] And sometimes you make a mistake and you're like, I didn't mean to play over the bar, but it sounds really good.

MD: Lately you've made it a point to showcase some of the players you were inspired by growing up, such as the studio-legends feature you spearheaded in this month's issue, as well as the clinics you've been doing with Deep Purple drummer Ian Paice.

Chad: Growing up, I would never in a million years think I'd be making records with Glenn Hughes or doing drumming events with people like Bad Company's Simon Kirke and Ian Paice, and having them say, "I really like the way you play." That's amazing to me. The cool thing is, the young people who enjoy what I do and come out to see me might not normally be exposed to players like them. I think it's important that they learn the lineage. I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing if it wasn't for this guy or that guy, and there's millions of them that I'd be able to say that about. And from a purely selfish standpoint, it's an excuse to hang out with my heroes and ask them what it was like being on the Starship jet or whatever, or to hang out with Jim Keltner and just soak it up. I *love* that stuff.

MD: What do drummers most often get wrong when they're trying to rock, or be funky?

Chad: You can't really *try* to be anything. You have to do what the music calls for, but first and foremost you have to be yourself. You have guys like Stewart Copeland or Phil Collins, and you know when you hear them that it's them. Even if they play different kinds of songs, or with different people, their personalities still come through. That's the pinnacle. The individuality of any instrument is what makes people latch onto a song and what makes them like it—or dislike it. At least you're getting a reaction. There's nothing worse than, "It's okay." I don't want to be "okay." If you believe in it, people pick up on that. I think our band has a sound, we make a statement.

People tend to focus on the heavy metal guys with the fast double bass chops, but there's great guys in every genre of music. Some people are like, "Oh, I don't like country music." Well, go listen to Hank Williams or George Jones or Merle Haggard. That drumming is authentic and soulful and moves people and makes those songs great. Those blues guys, like Buddy Guy—Hendrix wanted to *be* those guys. It all comes from somewhere.

I'm not saying there's not new guys doing it, but I try to go back to Chuck Berry and early guys like that. I can't play like a really good country player. But I can incorporate what their thing is, how they're approaching the music and the feeling. It's really about copping the feeling. It's like when I was younger, I'd listen to Led

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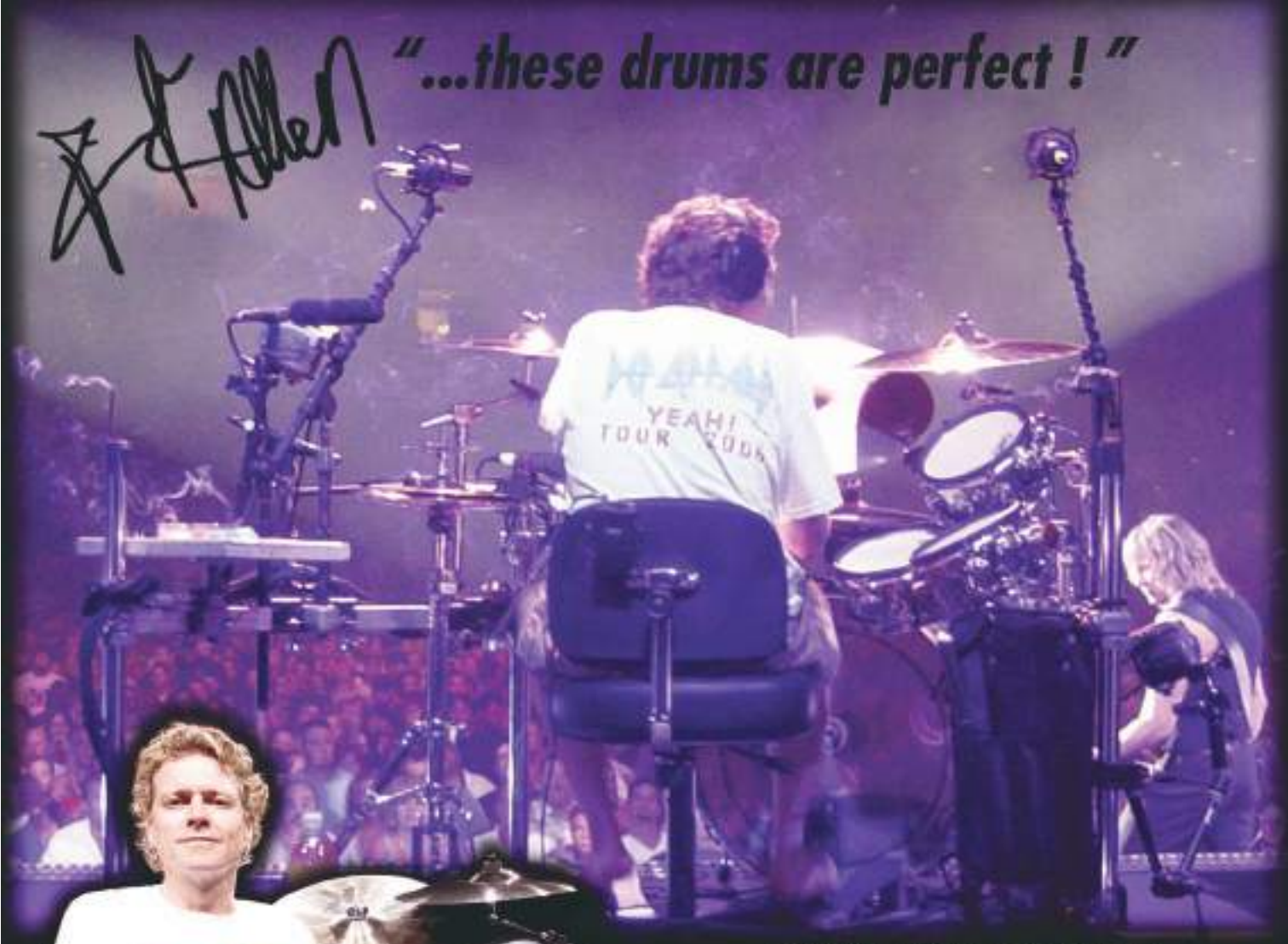

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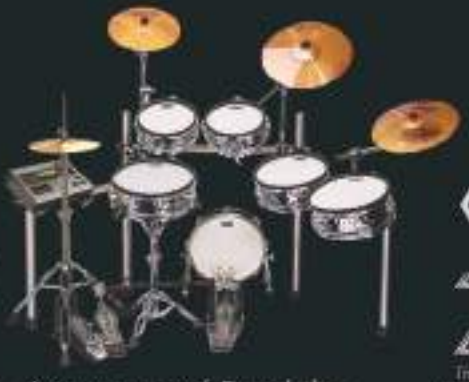

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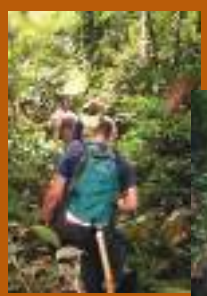

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THE BOYS IN THE BAND
CHAD ON HIS MUSICAL BROTHERS

Michael Muller

After nearly twenty years playing with the same group of musicians, you can bet Chad Smith knows singer Anthony Keidis, bassist Flea, and guitarist John Frusciante pretty darned well—as musicians and as people. So what's at the root of their famous musical telepathy?

"We've known each other a long time," Smith says, "and it's an interesting dynamic. It's kind of changed as we've changed as people. I think I'm the most different of all of us. They have closer tastes and likes and outlooks on life. I grew up in the Midwest, and they grew up in Hollywood, so maybe that's some of it. But I don't *ever* feel left out. Before, we'd all party and hang out, but now everybody's got their lives—you know, married with children. And it's fine, it's natural. I don't feel like I have to play golf with Flea or meditate with John to feel connected. We respect ourselves as people and as musicians, and we know that we have something special that we do together. When John left the band and came back, we realized, for whatever reason, these four people are supposed to be playing together. Obviously, with all the material we have on this new record, we still have lots of stuff between us. [laughs]

"Flea and I rarely talk about music," Chad adds, somewhat surprisingly. "Even when we play, we just naturally know what each other is going to do. He might say, I wrote this part and it's this tight funk thing, or we might make suggestions about each other's parts. But most stuff is unspoken. And Flea's in a great place now. He lives in Malibu and he surfs and he's got a great lady. And he's such a great musician. Forget about the slap-rock-funk-bass thing; he's just incredible, and melodic, and keeps his own time, without relying on the drummer. And that's inspiring.

"Anthony is smart and funny," Chad continues, "and he's gotten really great at finding the essence of a song. He's changing and growing. And he's really fun to be around. He's a great entertainer—though I always have to cue him. [laughs] Again, we don't talk about music very much.

"John Frusciante is the most incredible musician I've ever known," Chad insists, with obvious sincerity. "He just breathes, sleeps, and eats music. He knows everything about every type of music, a walking encyclopedia. That's inspiring. When we show up at rehearsal, I have to be on my toes, because John's coming in with like six great ideas. And his guitar playing on this album…it's *the* guitar album. Not in a loud rock guitar way, but there's a solo on almost every song. John is getting his on this one. [laughs] He's so into every aspect of playing and recording. And he's a sweet guy, like my little brother."

Zeppelin and Van Halen records, and I'd play along, and it was like I was trying to be that guy. I *can't* be that guy, but I want to try to get into that vibe of what he was doing.

MD: What's the easiest way to make a musical companion feel comfortable?

Chad: With the Dixie Chicks we had like eight people tracking at once. Luckily it was all talented people, like Mike Campbell from Tom Petty's band. But I was coming in cold. In situations like that, you go with your gut feeling almost all the time. This was straight-ahead pocket. Every song has its right tempo, especially to sing to. If the singer has to rush or drag, you're screwed. So I always make sure that when we're cutting something, Anthony sings to it.

Besides that, make a good vibe, make sure everybody's happy to be there, and talk. It's very social. You want everyone to be comfortable, because if they're comfortable, they're going to play relaxed. You can't come in like, "Hey, I'm the man!" You just have to serve the song and do what they want you to do.

I didn't play anything that I didn't think was right, but because they wrote the songs, they had a vision, and I had to respect that. In our band, we write everything together, and I know where it came from—though I'm always willing to try anything. You can't get your hairs up if somebody wants to change something. You won't know unless you try it. It might be the stupidest suggestion. You know, "Do something on the toms." I'm a drummer guy, so I go right to the hi-hat. You have to be open. Rick Rubin's really big about that: "It might suck, but just try it for me, I just want to hear it." And you never know what kind of doors that opens creatively. Don't be stuck on this really cool part you came up with at home and really want to fit in somewhere. You have to be open.

MD: Did you find yourself playing different kinds of grooves with The Dixie Chicks? They're not ultra-traditional.

Chad: No, they're not, and on this record it kind of sounds southern California, Sheryl Crow-ish. But I did some waltzes! I didn't say it, but I was thinking, I don't do foxtrots. [laughs] The last time I did that was seventh grade dance class. But they're cool songs…there was this Irish-sounding thing too. But I surprised myself a little.

PROPS FOR PEERS

Want to know more about Chad's drumkit priorities? Read what pops into his his mind when asked about some of these famous drummers.

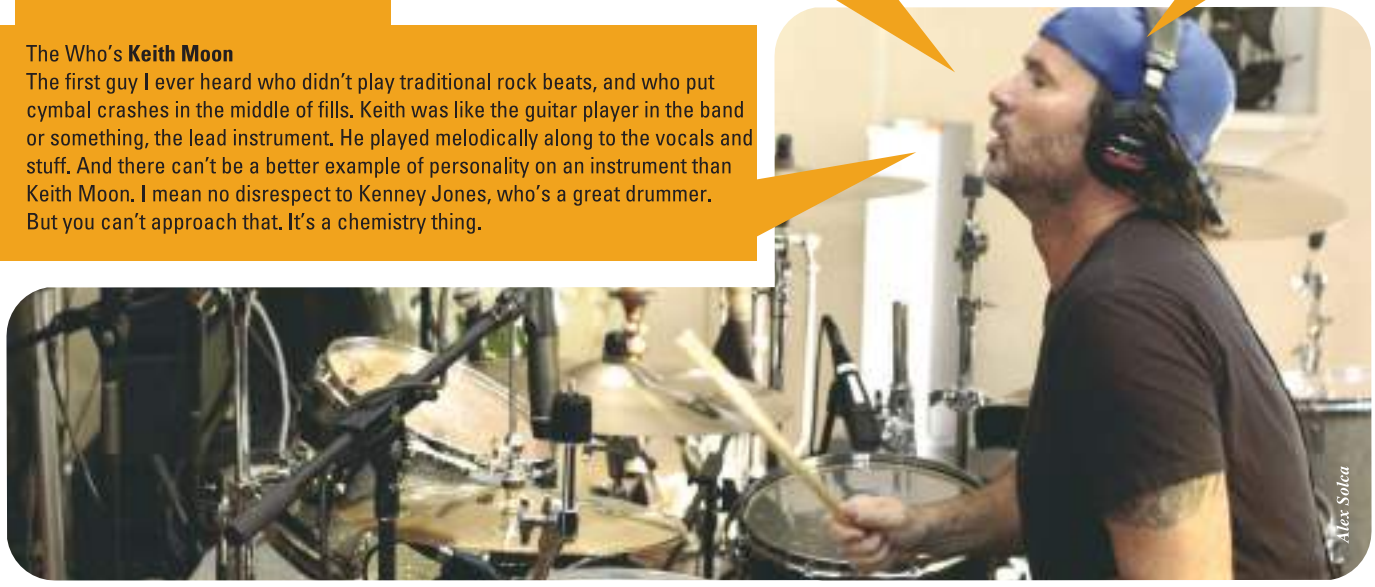
Deep Purple's **Ian Paice**
English. Funny. Traditional. Huge early influence on me. When I started on the drumset, he was the guy to listen to. And I'm in awe of him, so sometimes I have to remind myself, he's just this guy, like me. But fan guy comes out sometimes, and I know how people are with me at times, so I have to curb my dorkness. I have to dork down. [laughs]

Terry Bozzio
Freak of nature. Sweetheart. Animal. Dale Bozzio. The groove in "U.S. Drag." No one does what he does as far as the drums as a solo instrument. He's taken it to whole new levels, and that's great. A drum ambassador, and an innovator. Always thinking about the future of music and drumming. I'm always interested in what he's doing, because he's always doing something completely mind-blowing. I really like to see him rock out with a band, too.

Grand Funk Railroad's **Don Brewer**
Oh, man. Afro. Power trio. Detroit. I saw him when he played with Bob Seger. Where I grew up, you couldn't get away from Grand Funk. I got the yellow vinyl of *We're An American Band*. That era…I played the beat to "We're An American Band" in Hyde Park during my "Drum Homage Medley." I know his drumming seeped in, because I listened to a *lot* of Grand Funk.

Audioslave's **Brad Wilk**
A super-nice guy. I really like him as a person. He's a contemporary of mine. Powerhouse. Loves his cymbals, his crashes. Doesn't mind beating the hell out of them for a groove. Funky and hard-hitting. A lot of the stuff I like is in his playing. And he's an integral part of Rage Against The Machine and now Audioslave.

The Who's **Keith Moon**
The first guy I ever heard who didn't play traditional rock beats, and who put cymbal crashes in the middle of fills. Keith was like the guitar player in the band or something, the lead instrument. He played melodically along to the vocals and stuff. And there can't be a better example of personality on an instrument than Keith Moon. I mean no disrespect to Kenney Jones, who's a great drummer. But you can't approach that. It's a chemistry thing.


Alex Solca

And it's great having new challenges. Going in, I was a little nervous. Not that I thought I wouldn't be able to do it, but it's just like going to a new school; everybody wants to fit in. But Rick was like, "They want to rock up a little bit. You'd be good, come on down." So when I was preparing to bring my drums down there, I was like, "What should I bring?" And Rick was like, "Just be you, I want you to sound like you." Which was really cool, a nice compliment actually.

MD: Did you study up on their records?

Chad: I probably heard one or two of their songs, but I didn't go back and research them. You have to bring your own thing to the table. If they wanted it to be like those older records, they would have gotten the old guy. Unless that guy's dead [laughs] and you're replacing him specifically to sound like him. But that would be like me wearing a suit or something. I don't wear suits. It won't sound right, so get the guy with the suit.

MD: Let's take the different elements of the drumkit and talk about any obstacles you've had to get past in your development as a drummer. Let's start with the hi-hats.

Chad: For me, the kick, snare, and hi-hat are the holy trinity of the drumkit. With rock and funk, the hi-hat is the thing that the most notes are played on, and it's the lead timekeeper on the kit. Plus there's so much personality you can get out of it, not only the dynamics, but the rhythms that you play, and what you can do with your foot—closed, not closed, in between. It has so many possibilities.

I was a real rock player growing up, a real basher, so my hi-hats used to be really big and open and sloshy all the time. In 1982 I played in a group in Detroit called Pharaoh that had some the best players in the area. I was twenty years old and I knew the leader's son from high school, so I got picked for the band. The other guys were like, "This guy's a hack, man," these very accomplished North Texas State guys. But the percussionist was Larry Fratangello from P-Funk, and Larry kind of took me under his wing. He was like, "Here's some Tower Of Power records, learn how to play this."

Larry and I would ride together to rehearsal every day, and we'd listen to all this great music in the car. He turned me on to a lot of funk stuff, and he explained the way that those guys would play the hi-hat—the dynamics, when to open it up right before you go to the chorus, and barks

Chad Smith

and accents you can do with it. Before, I was banging away on it like it was just another cymbal. He also taught me when to do a fill, when not to, how to use toms in my beats, how to think of the kit as one big instrument, keeping time, listening—just musical stuff. I think I was a drummer up until then, and then I became a musician. He's a first-call percussionist in Detroit now and teaches a lot.

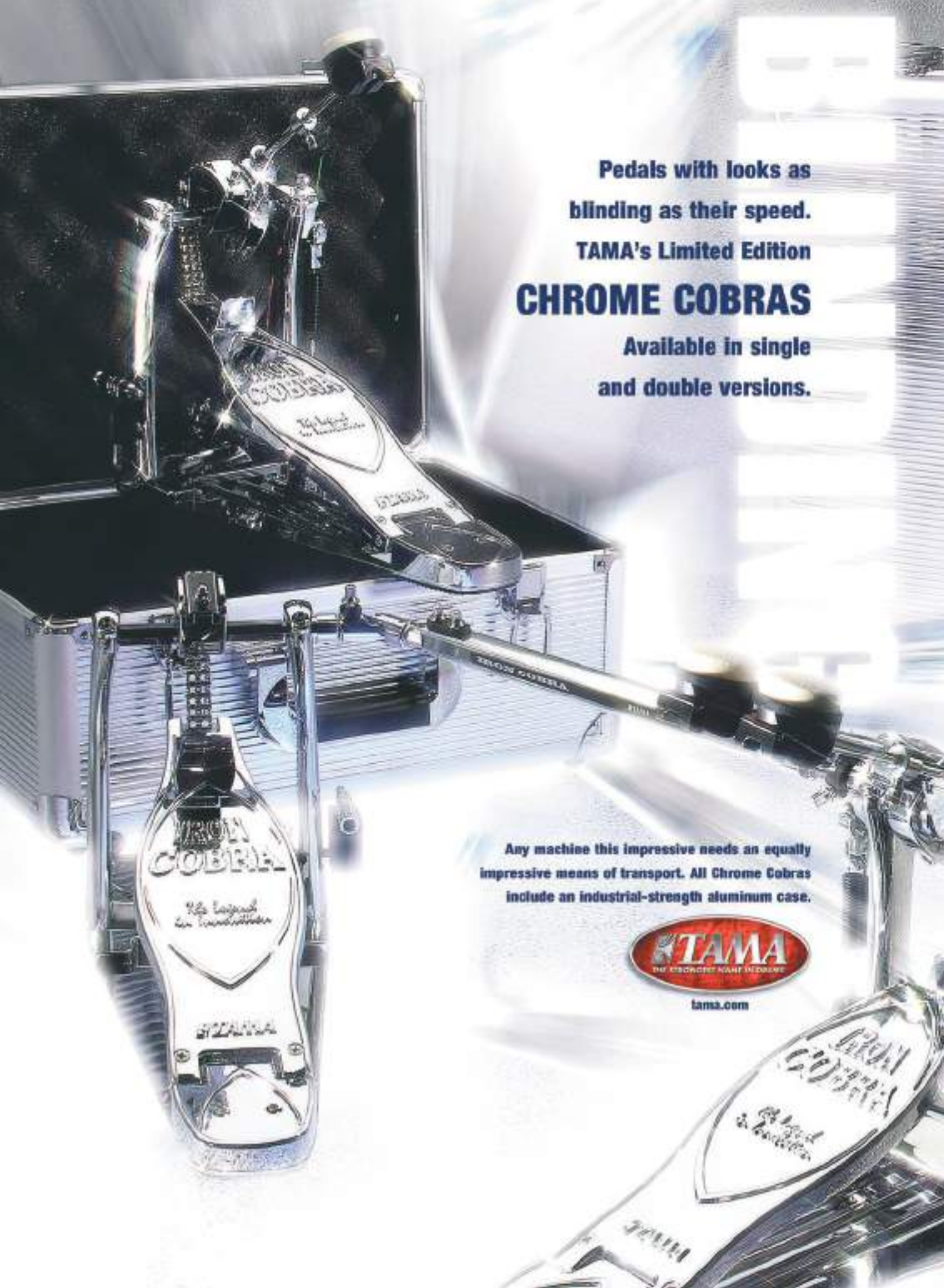
MD: The snare drum.

Chad: The snare drum is the most recognizable voice in the drumset. Like, if it's Stewart Copeland, you'd know it from the snare sound. I used to really analyze snare sounds. I'd go back and listen to those drummers and those records that I love from the early '70s, like Ian Paice, and they had that kind of tight, more jazzy tuning. Bonham's snare drum was tight, although it was a big drum. And I like that. But I couldn't get that sound because I just didn't know how to do it, and I had these bigger drums.

I think once I got into the metal drums and the brass drums and the smaller sizes, I found my sound. When we did *Blood Sugar Sex Magik* I used mainly this 5" Black Beauty. When you find a drum that sounds really good, it makes you play better. The snare is the drum you're playing all the time. That's the backbeat, that's what people are dancing to, and that's what the band hears. It's what pushes the track.

When I got in the Chili Peppers, we were doing a lot of fast, funky stuff, like James Brown on speed. And in order to really cut through, and because of the way I played

Alex Solca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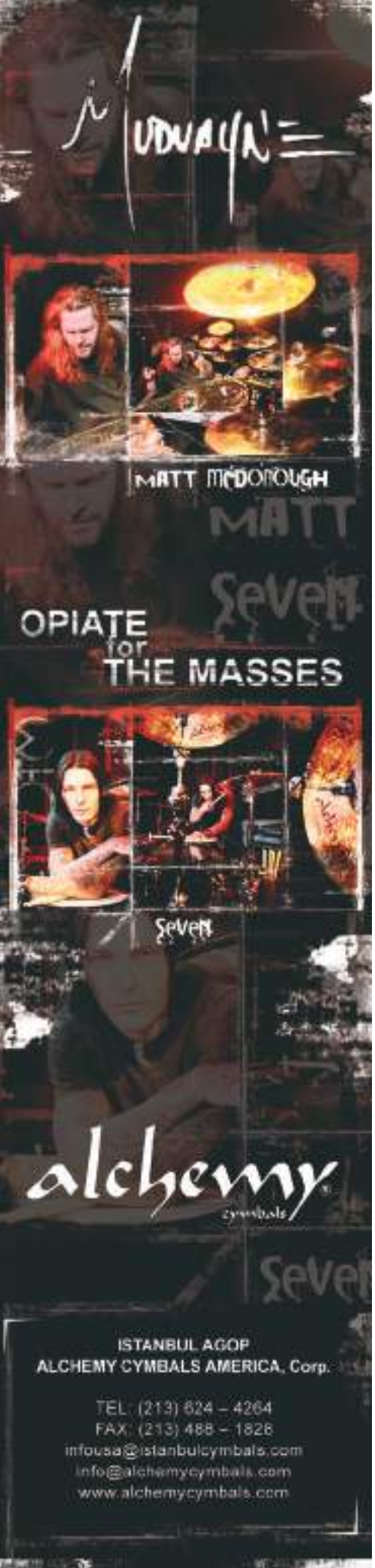

Chad Smith

with ghost notes, I used a Pearl free-floating piccolo drum, which wasn't bad. Really cutting. But there wasn't a lot of body to it, so I settled on a 5" drum, and that seems to be versatile enough. I like just a little higher pitch, and the smaller drums give you that. So that's kind of where I'm at right now. On the Glen record, which is more rock, I ended up using a bigger drum, a 6". I used that on the Dixie Chicks album too.

MD: With ghost notes, do you find that it's best if you're not thinking too much about them?

Chad: Yes. I hardly think about it at all. It's just really an extension of how I play a groove. Unless I'm really trying to articulate those notes, then I would think about it. But in general, just playing a straight 2 and 4 groove, I don't think about what my left hand is doing in between. I don't know if it's a good thing or a bad thing, it's just being natural. I just like the way that sounds. Sometimes Rick will say, "What's all that? You've got to cut that stuff out." I understand what he means, because sometimes it can be too much. It all has to be in the context of the music.

MD: Something I've been thinking of lately in my own playing is finding certain fills that I might just retain for a particular song. Because my tendency is not to plan things, which I'm trying to change a little. So now maybe I'll do a variation on one basic fill, rather than just splattering different ones all over the place. Do you think about that?

Chad: At first I'm just thinking about coming up with a part that will complement the other instruments or the vocals, not so much the variations. Then, going to the second chorus doesn't necessarily mean you have to play more, but rather give the impression that it's a bigger deal this time, maybe leading into the solo. You want to let people know, Here comes the solo! That's exciting. It's about building the song and trying to keep it interesting for the listener. Something new happens, and hopefully you can do it without being distracting. That's the only issue: You don't want to step on anybody.

I'm not a Neil Peart all-thought-out kind of guy. I'm more like you, I just kind of go for it and see what happens. When you're recording, you can go back and listen to it, and you might think, "Hmmm, maybe I should do less" or "maybe I should do more" or "maybe I can serve the same pur-

MAKE IT A DOUBLE

The Chili Peppers' new studio album, *Stadium Arcadium*, is a double, placing it among a special group of rock epics that are busting with so many ideas, a normal disc won't hold them all. For his *Modern Drummer* Listeners Guide, Chad Smith shared his list of favorite double albums, as well as the ones he gravitates to for "special" occasions

Fave double albums:

The Beatles, *White Album*…**The Who**, *Quadrophenia*…**The Clash**, *London Calling*…**Led Zeppelin**, *Physical Graffiti*…**The Rolling Stones**, *Exile On Main Street*...**Kiss**, *Alive*

Morning music: **Johnny Cash, The Carpenters, Mozart, Black Sabbath**

Love me some **Peter Gabriel** and **Marvin Gaye** for the ladies

James Brown if you want to boogie oogie

Pink Floyd for partying (or headphones), **Hendrix** for the headphones (or partying)

Frank Sinatra for martinis before dinner

Sex Pistols for pinball at The Powerhouse Club

Humble Pie for cranking your car stereo

Van Halen to play drums to in the garage

Rush to air drum to

The Strokes and **Queen** for late-night pool

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pose with just one snare shot," and leave some space. And that tension makes it exciting. Just from being in the studio and having experience with that, I think I've become pretty good at that.

Sometimes it's about playing as musically as you can, but then at other times it's about just rocking out and the raw excitement of playing something that's kind of off the wall. That can be really cool too, because you get, "Wow, that dude's really going for it." I like that too. I like people who take chances.

MD: What about tempos? At this stage, are they still an issue?

Chad: I'm the one that makes sure the tempos are right. I've got this little Tama metronome thing. That way the guys are confident that the tempo's right. You can end a lot of arguments with that. And then they feel confident when they're playing it, even if they're thinking, "This feels slow tonight," which sometimes happens when you play live every night. Maybe I laid around all day in the hotel: "Oh, this is too fast." No, this is where it is.

MD: I had a strange experience with tempos recently at a gig. I thought there were a couple songs that I started off too slow. So after the show I was going to apologize to the guitar player, but before I could he was like, "It was a really good show tonight. The tempos seemed really on." And I'm thinking, "Okay, I'm not going to say what I was going to say."

Chad: You never know, man. It is a weird physical phenomenon. When you play every night on tour, and you're like eight months in and you keep playing the same songs, they can really get a little out of whack. Taping is great, if you can stand to listen to it and take the time to go through the tapes. The songs that I don't start, if Flea or John are a little off, I can look at them and kind of give them the old, *This is where it's at*. I try not to make it too obvious, but it's all part of playing live, which is great. Otherwise you have to play with a click. Screw that.

MD: Another thing I struggle with is "jumping on the train," you know, when the drums come in after the song starts, and doing it without affecting the tempo, especially with slower songs.

Chad: Yeah, absolutely. It's harder to play slower tempos in general, just to make them feel confident and solid. Anybody can play fast. You can get away with it. The more space, the harder it is.

MD: You don't always want to have a hi-hat thing going in those situations, so I try to keep some part of my body moving in time.

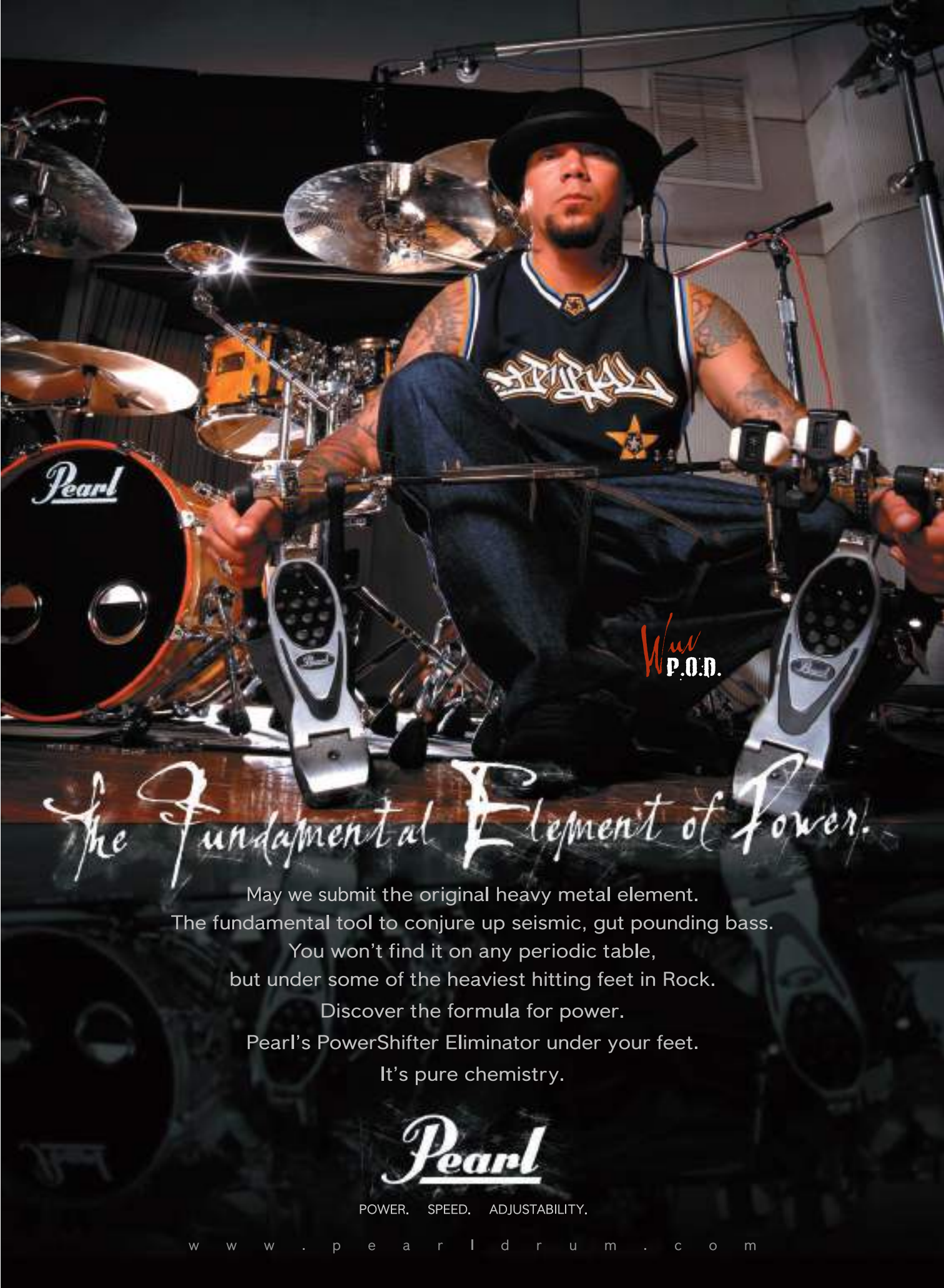
Chad: I think your body should be moving all the time. It teaches your limbs to talk to each other, and to do the same thing in certain grooves. I do the same thing when I'm getting ready to count something off. I'm not stiff. I get everything moving. I think it's just like revving your engine. You don't want to stop cold and then step on the gas. So, yeah, I would move something—your head, your neck. You don't have to look like you're air drumming back there, just get into the feel.

MD: Can you recall any difficult musical lesson you had to learn on a gig?

Chad: I did a session with Fishbone, and it was with Billy Bass, who was the bass player for P-Funk for a long time. So it was three bass players: Flea, Billy Bass, and Norwood. And it was me, a percussionist, three guitar players, a keyboard player, horns…there were like ten people. This was at a studio in Venice. I was in this upstairs loft space where the drums were, which was kind of odd. Everybody was on the floor and I was upstairs looking down on them. There was no ending to one particular song, it was just like a fade-out. So I'm playing and everyone's rocking, and we get to the end of the song, so I stop playing. Billy Bass looks up and goes, "What are you doing?! Don't you ever stop until I stop!" And I was like, "Oh, shit!" I was really chastised, in front of all these people. He really let me have it. I was embarrassed. Flea is looking at me like, "Man…look at Billy Bass, don't screw around." And believe me, the next track we did, there was a twenty-minute ending, my friend. The tape ran out. [laughs]

MD: You mentioned in the liner notes of *Greatest Hits And Videos* that the band would hopefully be remembered for more than just "the socks." Ideally, what would you like to be remembered for?

Chad: That we played music that was from our hearts, and that we were honest and passionate and that we are music lovers…. And that we persevered and stayed together twenty-plus years. That's a long time for a band to do what they do and still be relevant. We're very fortunate.



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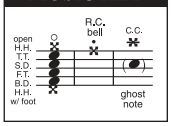
The Evolution Of Chad Smith's Grooves

by Ed Breckenfeld

MUSIC KEY



It's hard to imagine a more perfect drummer for The Red Hot Chili Peppers than Chad Smith. Fate brought them together in 1988, when the Chili Peppers were a regionally popular punk/funk band out of Southern California with a reputation for wild stage shows and a few innovative but largely undiscovered albums under their belt.

After the loss of a couple of members, the band found new guitarist John Frusciante and began the long search for the right drummer. "We auditioned about fifty thousand drummers and hired Chad Smith," says bassist Flea in the liner notes of the remastered *Mother's Milk* album. "Chad sat down at the drums and lit a fire under our asses…he could play drums on anything."

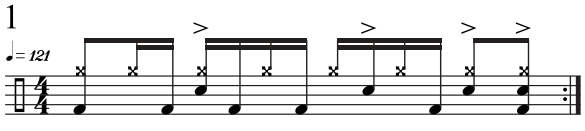
Indeed, finding Chad Smith was fortunate for the band. Drummers with enough power to handle the slamming hard-edge of rock and punk, while possessing the skills and finesse to create compelling funk grooves, are few and far between. Chad's taste, versatility, and technical ability became invaluable ingredients in the band's developing sound.

As the band's music has evolved over the years, so too has Smith's drumming. But he always finds the perfect groove for each situation. Let's take a look back through Chad's Chili Peppers catalog and highlight some of his best grooves.

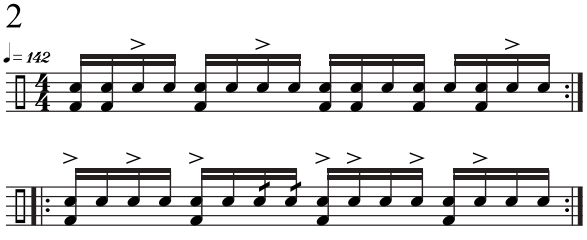
Mother's Milk (1989)

Chad's first album with the Chili Peppers became the band's breakthrough, gaining MTV exposure for the hits "Higher Ground" and "Knock Me Down." The two tracks below (Examples 1 and 2) sound as if they were written around Chad's dominating drum beats. The funky "Subway To Venus" groove contains an interesting snare/kick note at the end, while "Magic Johnson" switches between a unique trainbeat and a driving marching pattern.

"Subway To Venus" (0:00)

1

"Magic Johnson" (0:14 & 0:28)

2

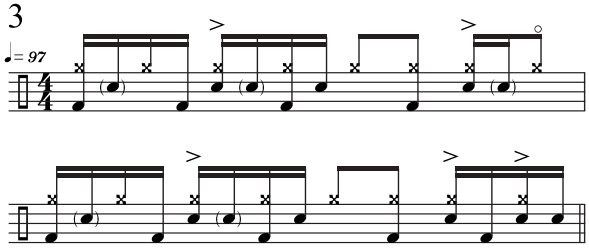


Blood Sugar Sex Magik (1991)

The band changed record labels and producers for their next release, which spawned the mega-hits "Under The Bridge," "Breaking The Girl," and "Give It Away." This album remains the Chili Peppers' all-time best-seller. Rick Rubin's stripped-down production brought out the details in the drumming, and Chad capitalized with some incredible grooves. Check out the ghost-note work in "If You Have To Ask," and the flowing 6/8 pattern of the haunting single "Breaking The Girl." Then it's back to the *funk* with one of Smith's greatest grooves, the swing-feel ghost-note magic of "Mellowship Slinky In B Major."

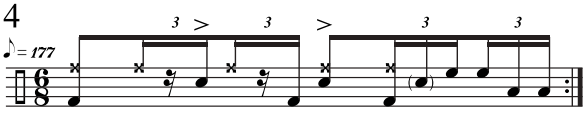
"If You Have To Ask" (0:20)

3



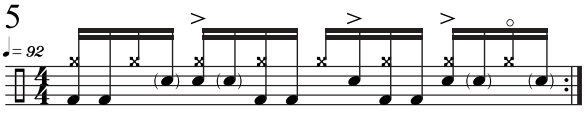
"Breaking The Girl" (0:54)

4



"Mellowship Slinky In B Major" (0:25)

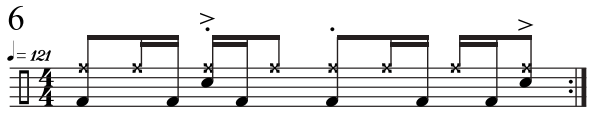
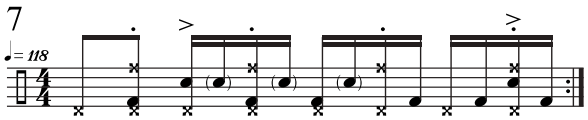
5



One Hot Minute (1995)

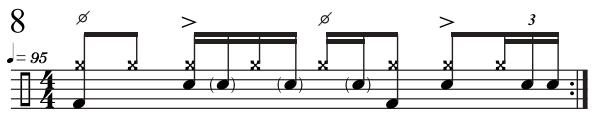
Not long after *Blood Sugar Sex Magik* was released, guitarist John Frusciante left the group. This led the Chili Peppers to bring in Jane's Addiction guitarist Dave Navarro. Navarro's heavy-hitting approach took the band in a more metal direction, pulling Chad back to his days as a straightforward slammer. Despite this change, *One Hot Minute* contains some great drum patterns. Chad's syncopated beat for "Warped" adheres to Navarro's guitar

riff like a second skin, and the bouncy offbeat groove of "Deep Kick" is a coordination challenge that features some nice snare work and an 8th-note left-foot hi-hat pattern that keeps the energy driving.

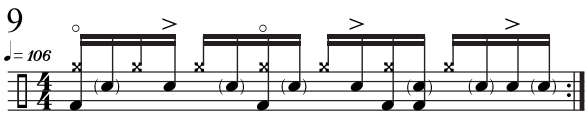
"Warped" (0:48)

"Deep Kick" (1:45)

Californication (1999)

Dave Navarro's stint in the Chili Peppers lasted for only one album. With guitarist John Frusciante back in the fold, fans had high hopes for a return to the band's earlier sound. And coming off like the real follow-up to *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*, *Californication* didn't disappoint. The funkiness that had been downplayed on much of *One Hot Minute* was restored, which meant that Chad was in his element again. His beat for the title track contains subtle left-hand work, while "I Like Dirt" features one of his all-time funkiest beats. And "Right On Time" shows that the inner punk is still present.

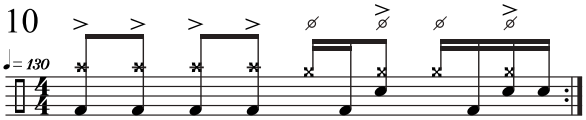
"Californication" (0:16)



"I Like Dirt" (0:12)

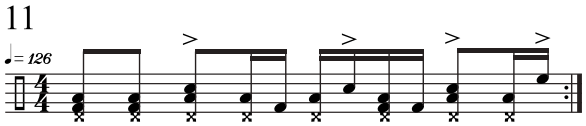
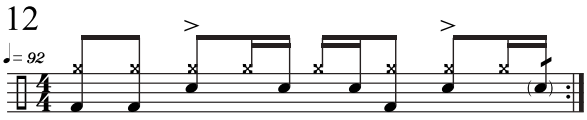


"Right On Time" (0:01)



By The Way (2002)

Having recaptured their crown as alt-funk kings with *Californication*, The Red Hot Chili Peppers designed their next release to showcase their soulful pop/rock side without dulling the band's edge. *By The Way* turns the focus to melody and harmony, and Chad Smith's drumming is right in step with this new approach. This album features stripped-down grooves that propel each song without unnecessary clutter. When called upon, Chad's energy still drives the band (as in his great tom groove for the rap section of the title track). But his simple beat for the guitar-led funk of "Can't Stop" shows how he selflessly plays for the song.

"By The Way" (0:35)

"Can't Stop" (0:32)

Ed Breckenfeld is a long-time Chicago-area drummer and drum instructor who records and performs with various Midwestern artists including The Insiders, The Cathy Richardson Band, and Jim Peterik's World Stage. Ed can be reached through his Web site, www.edbreckenfeld.com.

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The Studio Kings

Chad Smith Interviews
Jim Keltner, Hal Blaine, And Earl Palmer

Photos by Alex Solca

Earlier this year, when we approached The Red Hot Chili Peppers' Chad Smith about a cover story, he immediately brought up the idea of a piece he wanted to do—interviewing some of his favorite players. In fact, Chad seemed even more excited at the idea of getting together with some of his idols than appearing on the cover himself. And when he mentioned that he wanted to interview drumming giants Earl Palmer, Hal Blaine, and Jim Keltner, we thought, Why not?

No question, Palmer, Blaine, and Keltner are some of the most important studio drummers in the history of recorded music. According to Chad, "If you're serious about the instrument, then you have to go to the source. These three men changed pop-rock drumming. For instance, John Bonham would not have played the way he did if it hadn't been for Earl Palmer."

Speaking of Palmer, he recorded with Fats Domino, Little Richard, Ritchie Valens, Eddie Cochran, Ray Charles, Sam Cooke, Duane Eddy, The Monkees, Bonnie Raitt, Johnny Otis, Neil Young, and thousands of others.

Hal Blaine may well be the most profilic drummer in rock 'n' roll history. He was the most in-demand session drummer in Los Angeles during the '60s and early '70s. The artists he has worked with include The Beach Boys, Jan & Dean, The Mamas And The Papas, The Byrds, Sonny & Cher, Frank Sinatra, and Herb Alpert & The Tijuana Brass.

And of course, Jim Keltner is a giant in his own right, having worked with John Lennon, Bob Dylan, Mick Jagger, Joe Cocker, George Harrison, Willie Nelson, Roy Orbison, Pink Floyd, James Taylor, Ringo Starr, B.B. King, Eric Clapton, Ry Cooder, Neil Diamond, and Elvis Costello, among many others.

Chad took it upon himself to contact Earl, Hal, and Jim, and organize "The Summit," as he called it. As you'll see in the following interview, the four great drummers share a lot of info about the past, present, and future of drumming.

Chad: Let's talk about how you got started.

Hal: Actually, Earl got me started in town. I was working with a group called The Diamonds, and Earl was recording with them. But Earl was just so in-demand in the studio that he couldn't handle all of the dates. So he started throwing a few to me. And the same thing happened years later with me and Jimmy Gordon. When I became so busy, I started throwing studio gigs to Jim.

Earl: Early on, Ben Barrett started using both of us.

Hal: Ben Barrett was a contractor, and those guys were the gods.

Earl: And Bobby Helfer. He was the best contractor in the business.

Chad: He was the top dude then, right?

Earl: Well, it was Bobby who broke us into film work, because a lot of us weren't doing it in the beginning. If the man said he wanted you, he got you, you know what I'm saying?

Hal: Well, he told me that if I would work for him, he would pay me double scale, which he did. So I started taking those calls at Universal, in the Shelly Manne booth that they had there.

Jim: You're talking about an era that I got in on the last bit of, the whole thing with the movies, the contractors, the double scale, and the "No, we don't pay double scale." I had to go with what they said, because I wasn't Earl Palmer or Hal Blaine! After that, the only time I'd get a call for a movie date was when the composer would ask for me. But I was fine with it because I was doing record dates.

Chad: Earl, we've heard about how Hal broke into the recording scene. Tell me about how you got your start before LA, in New Orleans.

Earl: My uncle was a drummer with Dave Bartholomew's band. Later on, Bartholomew and my uncle got into a big hassle, so Dave wanted me to play drums with him. And I asked my uncle, "Is it alright with you? Are you going back with

him?" He said, "I'm *never* going back with that so and so." So that was the first gig I ever had. And through Dave I started recording with Fats Domino, and later Little Richard, and then other people started coming. But that was my original opportunity.

Chad: That was the beginning.

Earl: When Hal was talking earlier about working with The Diamonds and I helped him get started in the studio, it's funny, but I hadn't heard him play at that point. The Diamonds were on RCA, and I did a lot of RCA recordings at that time. And I remember Hal coming in and asking me, "Mind if I stand behind you while you record?" And I said, "Sure, no problem whatsoever." After that, when I was so busy that I didn't have time, I said, "Why don't you use Hal? He's a good guy." But I hadn't even heard him play.

Jim: You could tell the way he played by the way he talked.

Earl: Yes, and what he talked about. I could tell.

Jim: That's apparently the way Miles used to audition his drummers. He'd watch them walk from across the room.

Earl: I never heard that.

Jim: If they walked the right way, then he knew how they'd play.

Chad: Well, the funny thing is, Jim, you told me that you used to watch Earl and Hal.

Jim: Yeah, I used to sneak in and watch both of you guys! One time I was in a situation where I was playing in this little band and the record was going to be recorded by Jimmy Gordon, because I didn't have any experience yet. So I asked Jimmy, "Do you mind if I stay in the room and watch what you do?" And he said, "No, that's fine." So I sat and watched him play, and I remember that seeped in. And at that point I had already seen you guys play a bunch of times. Jimmy was copying Hal to a "T." He had the same-color drums, the same cymbals, the same exact *everything*. I had already started to copy Hal, too. So when I saw Jimmy copying Hal, I said, "I know I'm going in the right direction."

Earl, you were the mystery to me, because I only saw you from a distance on the MGM sound stage. You were recording with Little Richard. But seeing you play, and seeing Hal, were life-changing events for me. And sitting up close to Jimmy was also very powerful to me, because he was playing with the same kind of authority you guys were.

Chad: Earl, Jim told me that the first time he saw you, you scared the shit out of him. [laughs]

Jim: You were too dangerous. You're still dangerous.

Earl: I *was* dangerous.

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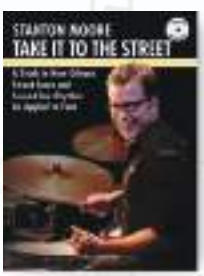

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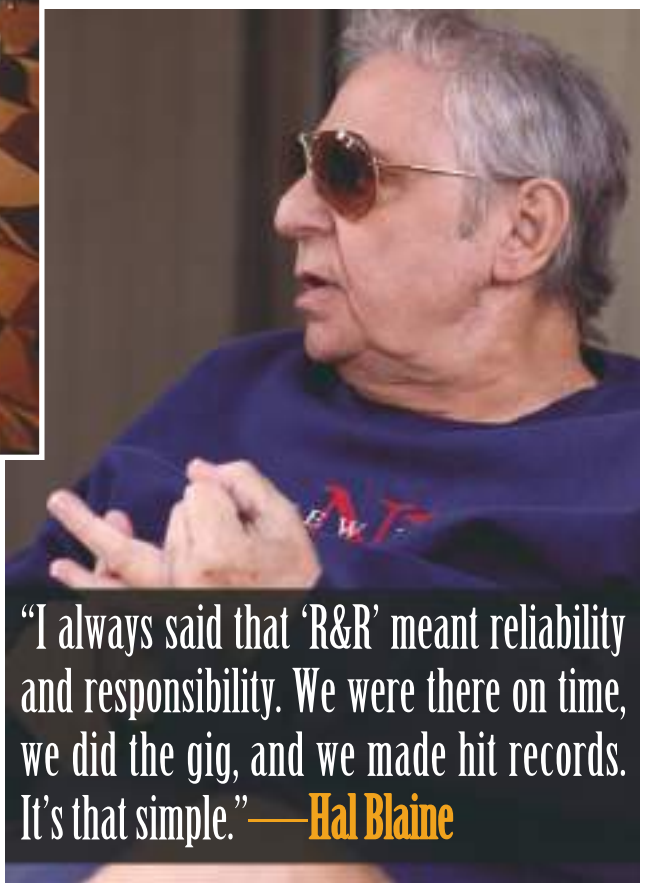
Hal hard at work in the late '60s



"I always said that 'R&R' meant reliability and responsibility. We were there on time, we did the gig, and we made hit records. It's that simple."—Hal Blaine

Chad: He said you were kind of scary.

Earl: You've got to remember, around that time there were a lot of other drummers trying to break into the scene. A lot of them were coming around trying to see what I was doing, because I had something different, coming from New Orleans. Everybody wanted to know, "How do you do that?" At that point I looked around and thought, "Well, as soon as these other drummers find out how I do what I do, then I won't be doing it. *They'll* be doing it."

Chad: So Jim, Earl was thinking you were coming to steal his gig.

Jim: He didn't even see me! I was too afraid to come up to him. [laughs]

Chad: Another thing I wanted to ask you guys about is how the West Coast studio scene evolved, from when you started through the changes in the business and turning points that you felt were important.

Hal: Well, I fell into the Beach Boys thing and Jan & Dean, which Earl and I always did together. That was probably the first double drums ever recorded.

Chad: Jan & Dean was double drums—"Dead Man's Curve" and all that? You guys tracked together at the same time?

Hal: Yep. We came up with identical parts and even the same fills.

Chad: So you would be set up next to each other?

Hal: Side by side. We were the hot guys at the time, and people wanted us. I mean, Earl was doing Percy Faith and I was working with Henry Mancini! All these incredible people started calling us because they wanted the backbeat. And a lot of the studio drummers at that time refused the idea of rock 'n' roll, period.

Chad: Stan Levy and those kinds of guys?

Hal: They would not play backbeat. Rock 'n' roll was garbage to them, and they wouldn't play it. And there were some great players around, like Mel Lewis, Jack Sperling, and Dick Shanahan who were some of my favorite players.

Earl: Some of those guys were always talking about that kind of music as being very unmusical. And then, when it *became* musical, they didn't want to play it.

Jim: And ironically, it was Stan Levy who played on one of my favorite songs at the time, Gene Pitney's "Town Without Pity."

Hal: One of my favorite stories along those lines is when I started going to the Drum Shop in Hollywood. When the guys at the shop got to know me, they'd say, "What's the beef between you and Irv Cottler?" I was like, "I don't have a beef. I never met the man." "Well, every time he's in here he really badmouths you." I said, "Really? I don't know the man. I never met him."

At that point, I hadn't worked with Frank Sinatra, who Irv always worked with. Well, one day I got this incredible call from Disney—to record with two orchestras, sixty guys on one side, sixty guys on the other, and me in the middle. Behind me on percussion was Emil Richards, Larry Bunker, and Irv Cottler. We spent a week there working on this movie, and I got to meet Mickey Rooney and a whole mess of people who were just great fun. Well, when we finished that week, Irv Cottler came up to me and said, "Man, I had no idea you were really a drummer. I thought you were just a loud rock 'n' roll guy. I really owe you a big apology." We became good friends.

Chad: That's a great story.

Hal: And then, to add insult to injury, instead of Irv doing Sinatra's records, I got the calls to do them. I really felt bad about that.

Chad: Earl, when you came out to the West Coast, what was the scene like?

Earl: When I came out to the West Coast…

Hal: …Earl, before you get into that, was that when there was a black union and a white union?

Earl: No, I came out just after that.

Chad: What year is this?

Earl: 1957.

Jim: They had a black union and a white union?

Hal: Yeah.

Jim: I sure wouldn't have believed that of Hollywood.

Earl: Listen, I went to school here in California many years before that. That's the reason I'm here, because I always wanted to move back here. When I did move out here, I didn't do a thing. Nobody would hire me. I did a couple of film calls, but I didn't do any for a long time because, although the unions had been amalgamated, producers weren't giving black musicians real jobs. Thankfully, that eventually turned around.

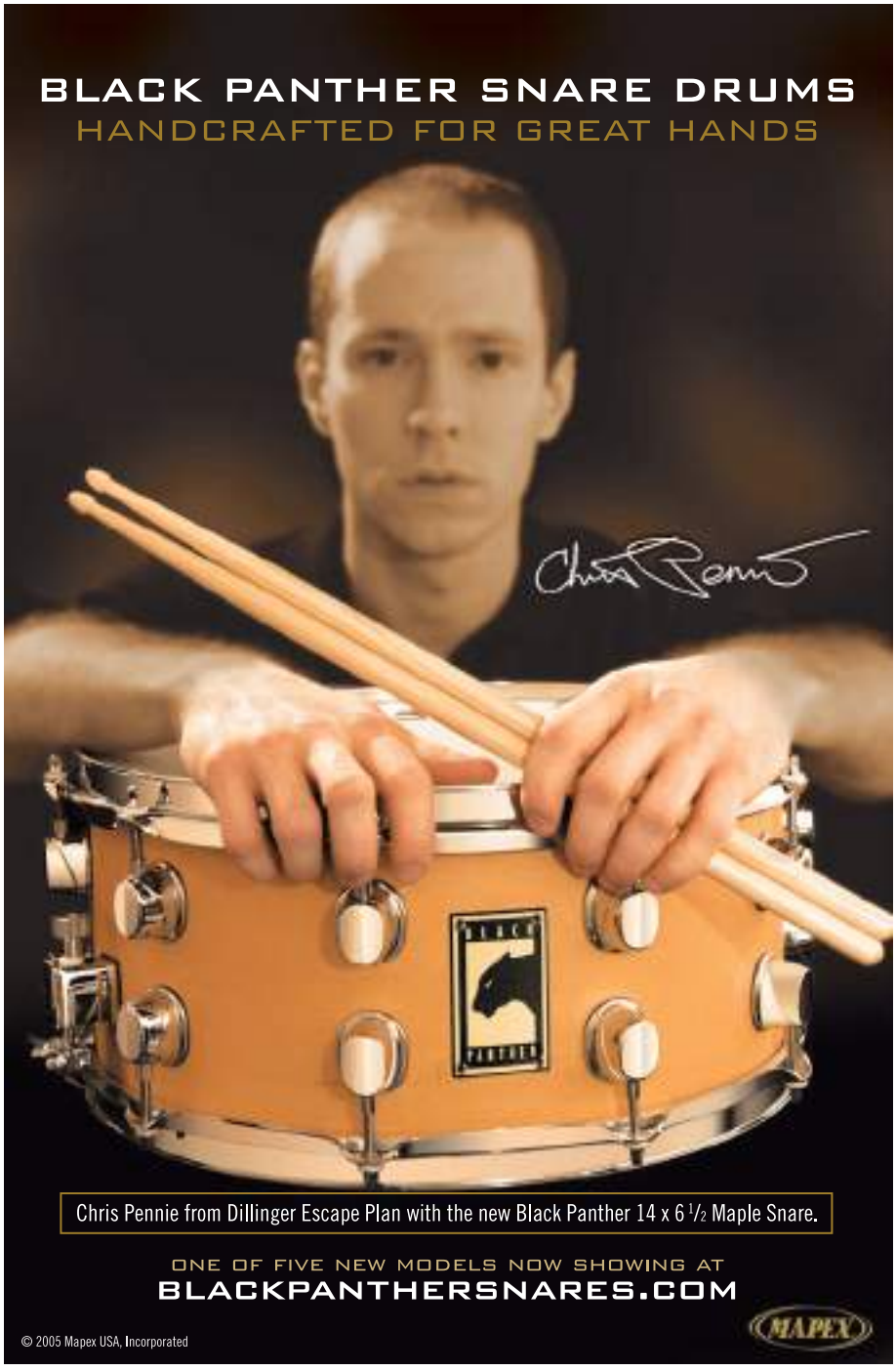
Hal: Later on, I think we all felt fortunate. The music became more sophisticated, and we got to play with all these artists that we

just loved. And as I've said in the past, most of us were nightclub musicians lucky to be making a hundred a week, and we fell into this vat of chocolate. [laughs] But here we were, all of a sudden making a thousand a day.

Chad: It's just timing in the music business.

Earl: And getting double scale. And not back-stabbing each other either, because if Hal couldn't do a date, he would call me and say, "I know they're going to call you. And I get double scale." I wouldn't undercut him and try to take his job. And we hung out together a lot, because many times we were working in the next room of the same studio.

Hal: Well, we were always straight, too, and reliable. I always said that "R&R" meant reliability and responsibility. We were there on time, we did the gig, and we made hit records. It's that simple.



Chad: Speaking of that, working in the studios during the '60s, was drug abuse a problem?

Hal: I've got to tell you that every time I was in the studios, I swear to you, I never saw drugs. We had coffee, Coke, cigarettes, and chocolate bars.

Chad: I think I remember reading about Jim seeing your kit for the first time in the studio and noticing that it was all cigarette butts and chocolate bar wrappers on the floor. And he said, "Geez, if that's what I've got to do to make it…."

Hal: Those were our drugs. But only in recent years did a couple of guys confess to me, "Hal, you were the only one who wasn't out of your skull."

Chad: Switching topics, it seems that Earl, you were the man when it came to backbeat. Hal, how did you learn about it?

Hal: Before I broke into the studios, I was working with a kid by the name of Tommy Sands, who had this little rockabilly group from Texas. That was before I was with The Diamonds. I had also been on the road playing big band stuff with Patti Page. She was a major star with that tune "Doggie In The Window."

Chad: But those recordings didn't have backbeat. Tommy Sands is where it started for you?

Hal: Oh, yeah. Another tie-in, family-wise, was Elvis's manager, Colonel Parker. He also managed Tommy Sands. That's how I met Elvis. Elvis didn't like strangers around him, and they knew that I could do the job. That's how I ended up working with him.

When I first got the call, I was also working as an actor at Paramount. Phil Kaghn, who was a contractor in those days, only knew of me as an actor. He said, "We can't use Hal with Elvis because he's an actor, not a musician." They had to convince Phil that I could do the job. But after that, Kaghn used me all the time at Paramount.

Chad: I didn't know that you started off as an actor.

Hal: Yeah, I did a couple of things. I also worked on *The Gene Krupa Story* with Sal Mineo. He was a nice kid.

Chad: Did you have a speaking part?

Hal: I was doing long-shot stunts for Sal Mineo, because we were both sort of the same coloring. By working in film, though, I got to meet a lot of people and I learned

the business. I ended up working with some heavyweights.

Chad: When did you feel that things started to change in the recording studio?

Hal: When electronics came in. That really kind of started it, right?

Earl: Yes. You can't stop electronics, because if you do, they bring up another, more sophisticated computer. You can't stop electricity, and drum machines came in and were "the next big thing."

I knew from the very beginning—when I saw that movie *Chariots Of Fire*, where the composer won the Oscar for writing and recording all the music himself with machines—I said, "That's it. There's no way in the world they're going to need drummers."

Jim: Do you remember demo sessions? Guys used to make a living doing demos. They were a great training ground for drummers coming up. But drum machines ended all of that.

When Hal and Earl were at the top of their game, a lot of people were coming up doing demos. I did demos in South Elmonte for a guy named Bob Summers.

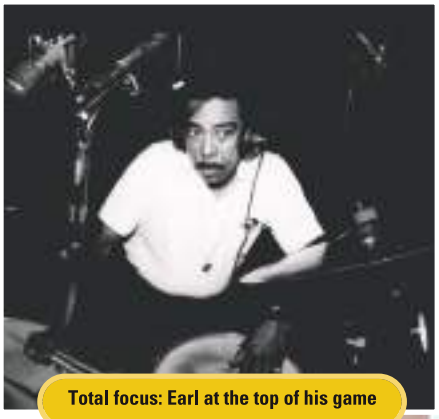
Earl: I know him.

Jim: He did a lot of arranging, but I would just do his demos. I would go in for an afternoon and cut an entire record. And I was just trying to play like Hal and Earl. But doing those demos is where I learned the craft. You'd listen back to a take and go, "That doesn't sound like Earl or Hal." [laughs]

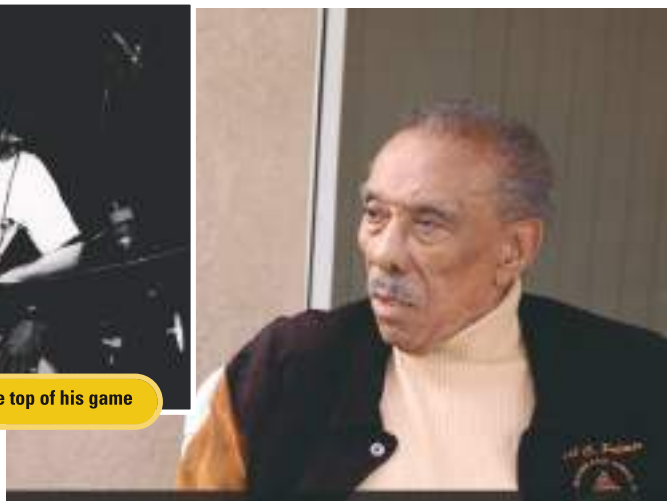
Hal: But that's how we all started—Glen Campbell, Leon Russell. There were six or seven of us who were doing demos, and Glen Campbell could sound like anybody. So the songwriters would come to you to do their demo so that they could present it to somebody at Capitol or to Nat King Cole, or to whoever was a big star who might record it. The songwriter would use the demo to sell their song.

Chad: I want to ask you all about a few people you worked with. Hal, I'll start with you: The Wrecking Crew and Phil Spector.

Hal: Working with Spector was one of the highlights of my early career. I think it was Steve Douglas, the saxophone player, who introduced me to Phil. When Phil moved out here and wanted to do some records, Steve was contracting for him and called me.



Total focus: Earl at the top of his game



"Whenever you played a fill on those records, it became something totally yours. It was your moment and it wasn't in unison with anybody. And I was lucky, because I got to experiment with this new style."—Earl Palmer

Working with Phil was one of those wonderful, incredible jobs because I was the drummer, but there were also four bass players and six or seven guitarists, and on and on. So that part of it was wonderful. I could kick some butt and really play. Of course, the part I played on "Be My Baby" sort of started a big trend in pop music with the beat being on "4." In fact, I did the same thing years later on "Strangers In The Night."

Chad: Was that beat played on snare drum and floor tom?

Hal: I was using a tom and a floor tom for that.

Earl: No snare? You got a nice, round sound out of that. I didn't know it wasn't a snare drum.

Hal: All of those little things were feathers in my cap, as far as my career was concerned. And Phil used to let me stretch out. All you have to do is listen to those records. I was going nuts on the ends of tunes because that's what he wanted. He was in there saying, "Go for it." You know, some of those fills were maniacal—16ths played against shuffles!

Chad: Another trademark of yours was using timbales. When did you start using them?

Hal: Well, little by little, I started using them when I was working for Terry Melcher at Columbia. He wanted me to try some different sounds. I took a set of timbales, and I put a tom-tom holder on the small one to use as a mounted tom, and three legs on the larger one, which became my floor tom. And I would loosen up the heads so that there was some decay. I loved that sound. The first record I ever used those timbales on was Frankie Laine's "Don't Make My Baby Blue." If you ever hear that record, it's pretty wild. You'll hear those timbale fills on it. And Terry loved it. He had me use them a lot at Columbia. And I got to where I wanted more sounds, to be able to do bigger, longer fills, and that's how I ended up designing what Ludwig called their Octoplus kit.

Chad: Not everyone knows you created it.

Hal: We kept experimenting with various sizes, eventually going from a 6" tom down to a 17", so that I could do big fills. And those drums were also tuned looser so that there would be a little decay on every one. That's how that whole thing happened. If you listen to Carpenters records, you'll hear those kinds of fills. I thought they were really beautiful and sensitive.

Jim: Like what you played on the Paul Simon song "The Boy From New York City."

Hal: Unfortunately, I don't remember those sessions.

Jim: I copied that fill exactly a couple of years back when I did the tour with Simon & Garfunkel, but I only had two toms!

Chad: Earl, can I ask you a little bit about New Orleans and playing with Fats and Little Richard? Did you feel that you were doing something groundbreaking at the

time, or did you feel like you were just doing another thing?

Earl: There was some talk about what I did being groundbreaking.

Jim: Earl, you told me one time about the difference between the straight and swung 8ths. A lot of people who are going to read this article in *MD* haven't heard this, and they've got to know about it.

The thing with Earl is, he came at a time when it was big bands—Jimmie Lunceford and all those kind of swing bands. So when he started playing the backbeat for the first time with Fats and Little Richard, he basically applied that jazz feel to the backbeat, and then had to flatten out his swing beat a little bit to match the music.

Earl: I think that would depend on what you're playing, because those bands—like Count Basie and Jimmie Lunceford—always had backbeat. But it was mainly in the shout choruses. Why we started doing it with rock 'n' roll was the fact that we were playing the shout chorus all the way through, because it was more exciting and they wanted that excitement at the beginning of the tune and throughout.

Hal: And people wanted to dance.

Earl: The thing that was fantastic about that music was that it dealt with the sound and where you placed the notes, rather than how much music was within the measure or measures. It was about the feel. And also, that's why the fills were a bit different. Whenever you played a fill on those records, it became something totally yours. It was your moment and it wasn't in unison with anybody. And I was lucky, because I got to experiment with this new style. But basically, my fills were big band jazz fills.

Hal: But in a rock setting.

Earl: Exactly. I bridged the gap between big band jazz and rock 'n' roll, as far as fills were concerned. And that's what made mine different. Going back to Hal for a second, he was one of the first studio drummers to focus on his sound, making sure you could tell that each one of those drums sounded different. He'd play a fill that would really be remembered.

Chad: It almost became a little hook within the song.

Earl: Right, because if you recall, sometimes he played the same one over and

"Seeing Earl, Hal, and Jimmy Gordon work in the studio was life-changing for me."—Jim Keltner

Cool shades: Keltner in the '70s

over within the song.

Hal: That was what hit record–making was all about back then. We learned how to create drum hooks, and that's what made for big-selling records.

Chad: Well, when you did a fill it meant something.

Hal: This reminds me of when I recorded The Tijuana Brass hit "Taste Of Honey." After the opening, when the band is supposed to start, originally it was a train wreck. Nobody came in together. I looked at the guys and sang that simple fill: "Here it is: boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. See if you can come in now." They came in perfectly, and Herb loved it. So they had me play the same fill in the middle and towards the end. It really became the hook of the song

Jim: Can I ask you a dumb question? Did you play that with a slight bit of anger?

Hal: It was comedy, actually. I was looking at the musicians, saying, "Here it is, guys!"

Jim: Did you ever do anything in anger with your playing that turned out good?

Hal: The only time I got mad that way, the one time I blew my top, was when I was working with Nancy Sinatra. We did some big show somewhere and they hired a percussionist. He thought it was *his* show. I told Nancy from the beginning, "Every time I start to play a break or whatever, this guy's playing all over the place. And he's playing every instrument he's got on every tune. What kind of stupidity is this?" And finally we got to one place and I couldn't take it. I just beat the crap out of my drums, man. I really did. I was upset. And Nancy noticed, and, after that, the percussionist was gone.

That's the one thing I'll say about some percussionists today. Every group you see now has a guy with five hundred toys, and instead of just catching a mellow groove and riding it out, these guys have to be playing something every second. Give me a break, man.

Earl: Some of those guys are showoffs.

Hal: We're *all* showoffs, but that's what happens with some of these guys.

Chad: I'm a showoff too! But how did each of you learn to be a good musician and know what's the right thing to play?

Hal: It's about learning what *not* to play.

Earl: And the other thing is, you, just because it's *you*, don't have to play everything that comes into *your* mind. It's been said many times, but it's true, man: Less is more.

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SONIC ATTRIBUTES

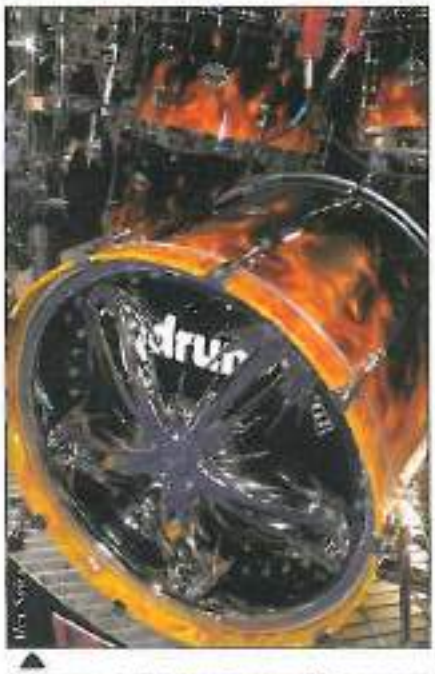
Every raw material has its own traits which define the cymbal's basic timbre. It is not possible to design a certain sound if the raw material used does not possess the certain sonic requirements, or to compensate for a missing sound characteristic of the raw material with other means of manufacturing.

MD's Great Gear 2006

Percussion Products Extravaganza

MD's 2006 Great Gear report is, quite simply, the most expansive we've ever presented. *Thirty-four pages* chock-full of eye candy for drum and percussion gearheads, with more and bigger photos than we've ever presented. And for those of you who *still* can't get enough, Web sites are listed to help you get more details.

DDRUM



Ddrum is blasting out of the acoustic-drum gate with eye-catching creations like this Custom Shop maple kit. It features a flame finish, add-on acrylic Decabon mini-toms, electronic pads, and triggers.

Ash kits are new in the mid-priced Dominion series.

The Diablo series now includes the SHE-Punx kit, a basswood kit designed specifically for young female drummers. List price is $649.99.
www.ddrum.com

DRUM WORKSHOP

New DW Collectors Series Vertical Grain Exotic (VGE) finish options include Macassar ebony, red gum, movingue, koa, and cocobolo over maple or birch shells. They can be combined with any of DW's Custom or Specialty Lacquer finishes and drum hardware colors.

DW and Randall May International have combined to offer May's Acoustic Equalizer (EQ) technology for drumset snare drums. Adjustable gates in the shell enable drummers to vary the tone of the drum by controlling the amount of air that leaves it. The 6x14 Acoustic Equalizer maple snare lists for $1,495.

One side of the Signature Daniel de los Reyes Practice Pro ($165.99) incorporates a 10" quinto-sized Remo FiberSkyn conga head and die-cast curved crown hoop. The other side is a dual-surface pad that represents a full set of timbales with cowbells.

The Jim Chapin Smart Practice pad ($39.99) features a 12" dual-surface design said to replicate the feel of a ride cymbal and a snare.

The 9000 series drum rack system features polished stainless steel tubing, heavy-duty matching clamps, tube-mounted cymbal arms, Soft-Grip rubber feet with integrated spikes, and a nameplate with a built-in level. Percussionists can also choose from two floating conga rack configurations.

www.dwdrums.com

GRETSCH

Gretsch's New Classic series is the company's first newly designed set in more than fifty years. Drums feature vintage-style tube lugs, Integrated Tension Suspension, and proportionate American maple blend shells. They're available in Deep Cherry UV gloss finish and Vintage Glass covered Nitron (shown). List price is $3,075.

Gretsch's roadworthy Renown Maple series is now available in additional sizes and configurations, and in new UV finishes including Slate Silver Sparkle (shown), Autumn Burst, Cherry Burst, and Blue Burst. List price is $2,230.

Gretsch is celebrating forty years of its 4160 snare drum with a new 6x14 hammered copper model. The 1.2-mm hand-hammered copper shell and Antique finish are said to give the drum a low tuning range and a clear, cutting tone at any volume level. List price is $865.
www.gretschdrums.com

LUDWIG

Ludwig's Accent CS Custom Elite series now comes in Silver Glitter and Tobacco Fade high-gloss painted finishes, while the Accent CS Custom series offers a Wine Sunburst satin oil finish. The Accent line features 100% birch shells.

The Ludwig LC0548 5x14 steel snare drum has a chrome-plated steel shell, eight Ludwig Classic lugs, and a professional Supra-phonic style snare throw-off.

The L316HH Custom hi-hat stand has been improved to include six positions of tension adjustment, double-braced legs, and smoother pedal operation. **www.ludwig-drums.com**

MAPEX

Mapex's four-piece maple Pro M Classic configuration features a 20x22 bass drum, a 9x12 rack tom, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 7x14 snare drum. It's available in new Bermuda Sparkle and Platinum Sparkle finishes at a list price of $1,629.

Mapex's 750 series hardware has been upgraded. The P750 pedal shown here is now equipped with a double-chain drive. Stands now feature double-braced legs and professional adjustments.

This Laser Canary finish—a bright yellow with subtle multicolor sparkles—is available on Mapex's Saturn drums. Also new are Black Cherry Sparkle and Electric Blue Sparkle. All three finishes were formulated to take full advantage of intense stage lighting.

www.mapexdrums.com

PACIFIC DRUMS & PERCUSSION

This Pacific MXR Satin Oil–finished configuration features a 24" bass drum and a 6x14 snare drum for heavy-hitting rock players. Kits are available in Cherry to Black Fade and Ebony Oil finishes. The five-piece kit with hardware pack lists for $1,667.99.

Pacific's SXE Series 10-ply all-maple snare drums are available in Charcoal Fade lacquer over Kurillian Birch with black hardware, Red Stain Lacquer over Tiger Ash with black hardware, and Amber Lacquer over Bird's-eye Maple with chrome hardware. List price is $365.99.

SXE solid-maple models are available in Charcoal Fade Lacquer over Kurillian Birch and Tobacco Burst Lacquer over Bird's-eye Maple. List price is $737.99. **www.pacificdrums.com**

PEACE

Peace's Paragon Custom Pro Choice series allows drummers to create their own configuration with any color choice offered in the Peace line. One such color is the new Emerald Rainforest Sparkle shown here.

Peace Marching Percussion instruments offer alternatives to schools that are on a budget but don't want to sacrifice quality.

The Elevation Rainbow series offers a holographic rainbow wrap covering that incorporates the Peace logo within the finish.
www.peacemusic.com.tw

PEARL

Pearl's new Hi-Hat Jingle Ring incorporates a reinforced striking bar, allowing it to be hit with sticks for a mounted tambourine effect.

Pearl's SensiTone Elite snare drum series features drums of brass, stainless steel, phosphor bronze, aluminum, and steel. Advanced metallurgy is applied to provide a vast range of response and power.

The Vinnie Paul Signature snare features six plies of maple, an 8R-017 strainer, and SuperHoops. The 8"-deep shell is covered in an exotic snakeskin finish complete with sinister spiked tube lugs.

Pearl drums, percussion, pedals, and rack components lend themselves to setups like this one for Crytopsy's Flo Mounier, designed by drum tech extraordinaire René Adolph. **www.pearldrum.com**

PREMIER

Premier's "Spirit Of Lily" kit recreates the original "Pictures Of Lily" kit made for The Who's Keith Moon in 1967. The limited-edition kit is a tribute to Moon on the fortieth anniversary of his signing as a Premier endorser in 1966.

Also new is this deep Stratosphere Sparkle lacquer finish in the high-end Premier series. **www.premier-percussion.com**

SONOR

Sonor's new SQ^2 system is a new approach to drum design for the company. The high-end line offers a virtually unlimited variety of shell material and drum dimensions for a custom sound, as well as drum and hardware finish combinations for a unique look. A new online drum configurator allows customers to create their individual setup.

Sonor's acrylic X-Ray series is included in the new SQ^2 program.
www.sonor.com

TAMA

Tama's Starclassic Bubinga series features 8-ply bubinga shells with an outer ply of Canadian maple, which can be colored more readily than the dense, deep-grained bubinga. The new line offers fifteen different lacquer finishes, a host of different drum sizes (including a 26" kick), and a totally redesigned lightweight Star-Cast mounting system.

The Starclassic Performer series is being completely upgraded with new drum sizes, new kit configurations, a new tom mount, and many new finishes.

Alex Solca

This 6½x14 David Silveria Signature snare drum features a 13-ply G-Maple shell, black nickel hardware, and twin abalone inlays.

Limited Edition Chrome Cobra pedals feature all-chromed parts and a deluxe lightweight aluminum carrying case. Single and double pedals feature Tama's Power Glide off-set cam. The single pedal lists for $315.99; the double version lists for $665.99.

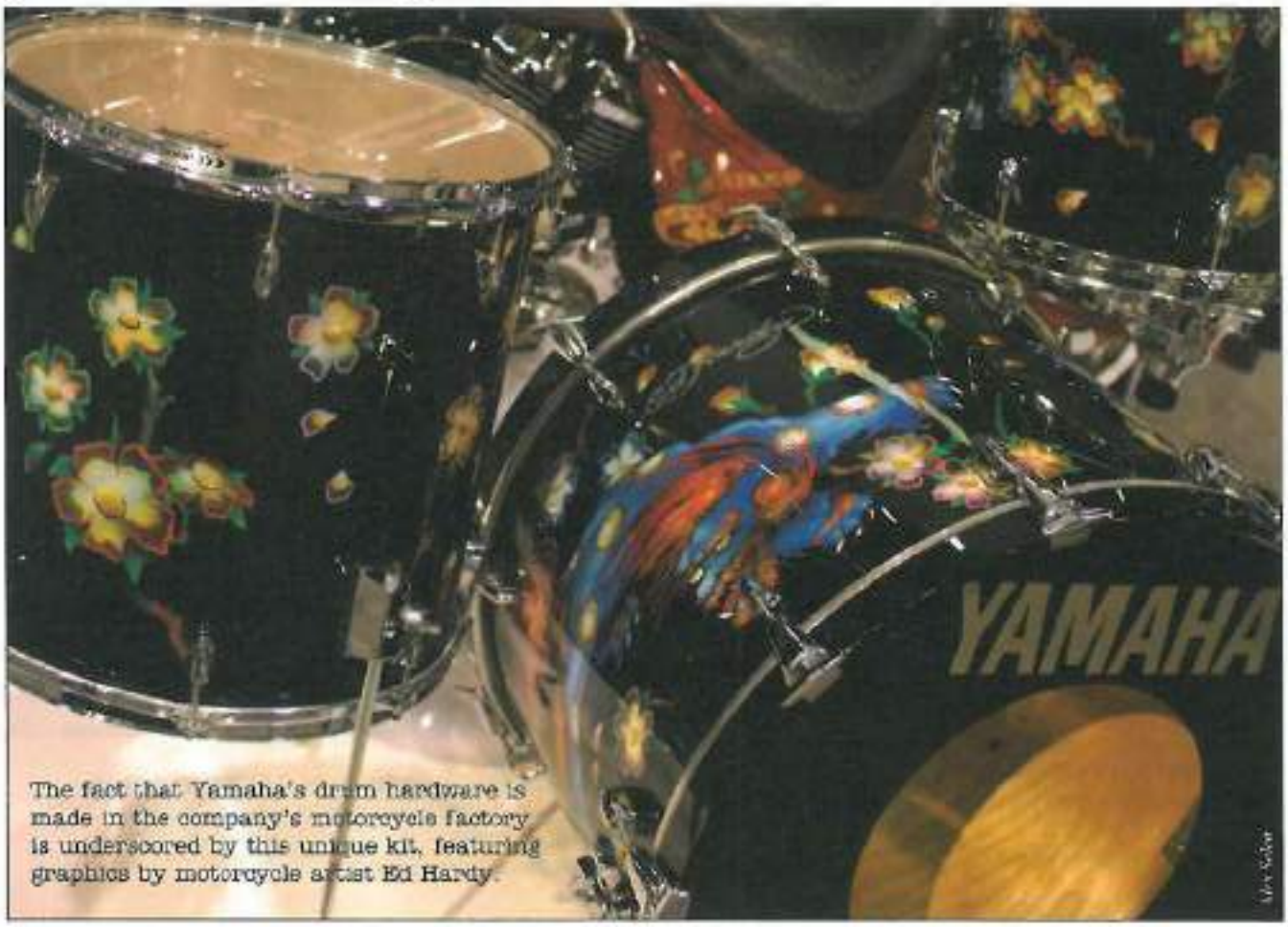
www.tama.com

TAYE

The Taye Originals drumset series features one-of-a-kind creations like this Sugar Maple kit in White Blue Burst.

Taye's most recent introduction is their Woodhoop snare drum series.
www.taye.com

YAMAHA



The fact that Yamaha's drum hardware is made in the company's motorcycle factory is underscored by this unique kit, featuring graphics by motorcycle artist Ed Hardy.

Only fifty of Yamaha's limited-edition Steve Gadd 30th Anniversary kits will be made. Many are already spoken for, despite a $12,000 price tag.

This Grand Symphonic snare drum features a rosewood shell, as well as the Triple Snare System (TSS), three-piece Tubular Tension Casings, and a choice of four types of snares. It lists for $2,286.
www.yamahadrums.com

AHEAD's new 6x13 and 6x14 snare drums feature black chrome-over-brass shells with chromed tube lugs, S-Hoops on top and bottom, Dunnett R-Class or Trick G8007 throw-offs, Fat Cat adjustable snare wires, and Remo heads. List price is $399.96.
www.bigbangdist.com

BRADY's Crystal finish utilizes a five-step lacquer process, including an application of crystals that produce unique patterns by natural oxidation. The company has also debuted a new pewter logo badge.
www.bradydrums.com.au

This Studio Wiz drumkit from **CADESON** features thin maple shells, wood hoops, and a Chinese Watercolor finish.
www.cadesonmusic.com

CANOPUS has designed their Vintage series to sound like the drums used on recordings from the '50s, '60s, and '70s. The V60 model shown here features the shell construction and edge shape of 1960s-era jazz sets.
www.canopusdrums.com

CHOP SHOP is a custom drum operation co-owned by drum builder Brian Coccivera and Poison drummer Rikki Rockett. This kit, created for Rikki, is an example of the kind they hand-craft to the player's exact specifications.
www.chopshopdrums.com

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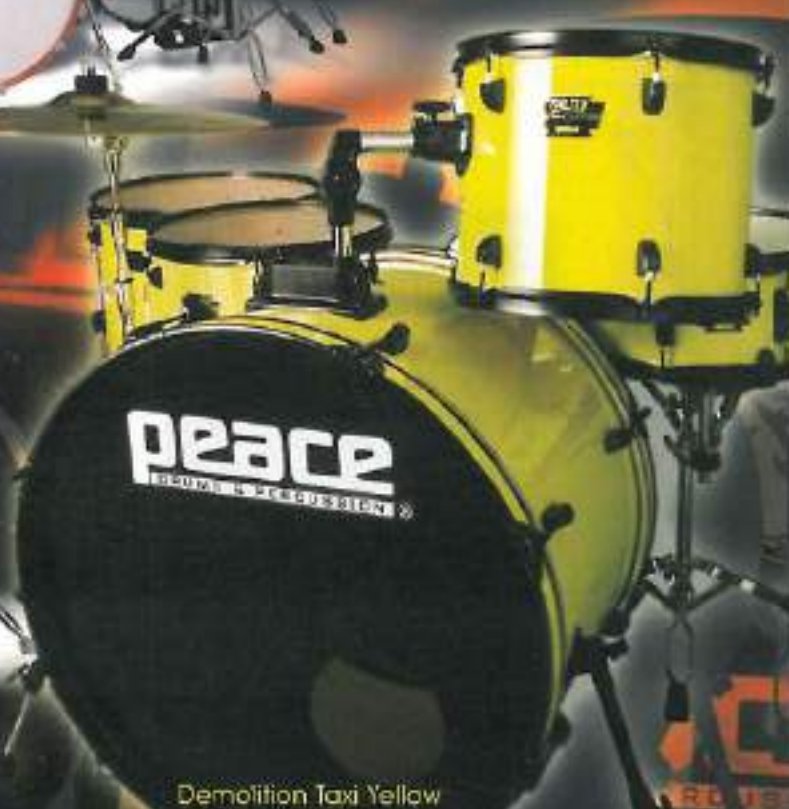

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CRAVIOTTO offers complete solid-shell drumkits in two configurations. The Tonal Balance series shown here includes small drums that respond quickly yet provide full tone. Craviotto Classics kits feature traditional sizes.
www.craviottodrums.com

Hammered-brass shells give these drums from **DC CALIFORNIA** a unique tonality.
www.dccalifornia.com

DUNNETT
K (Kore) Class 13" and 14" snare drums feature upper and lower sections of stainless steel or titanium fastened to a center core section made from domestic or exotic wood. The drums are designed to be substantially lighter than other wood-metal hybrids for extended tuning range and warm tonality. Street prices range from $750 to $1,050.
www.dunnett.com

FENDER now offers Squier Series drumkits for entry-level players. They come with *Practice Tracks* play-along CDs in rock, blues, and jazz styles, from Image Entertainment.
www.fender.com

This swirling, iridescent Black Lightning wrap finish is new to **GMS**'s Special Edition series. Drums feature the same shells as on GMS's high-end Grand Master kits, with smaller low-mass SE lugs.
www.gmsdrums.com

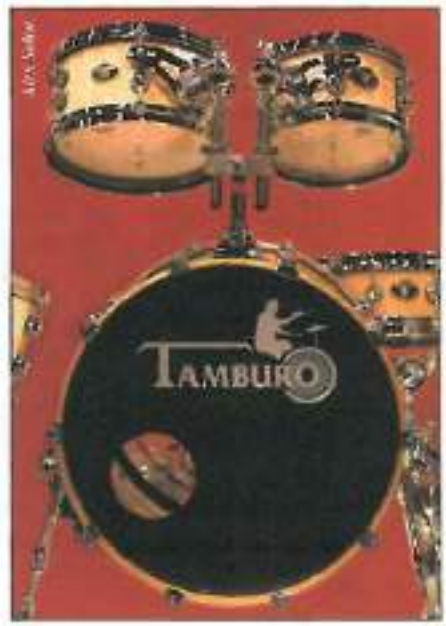
ODERY offers shells made from solid blocks of exotic woods such as jatoba, imbuia, tamarin, and eucalyptus. The thick-shelled drums are said to produce a dry, aggressive sound. Odery has also introduced a quick-release lug system, as well as a new high-tech throw-off mechanism.
www.odery.com.br

This "Fire Alarm" custom snare from **ORANGE COUNTY DRUM & PERCUSSION** features a genuine firefighter's badge and banks of L.E.D.s that flash in a programmable sequence.
www.ocdrum.com

This huge maple kit in candy orange sparkle fade is an example of **PORK PIE**'s custom creativity.
www.porkpiedrums.com

This high-end **SLINGERLAND** kit features die-cast hoops, new tom suspension plates, and an all-maple shell. It's finished in Trans Blue Black stain over a flame maple veneer.
www.slingerland.com

SPAUN is noted for exceptional graphics on their custom drumkits, like the fire dragon artwork shown here. Acrylic kits with sand-etched patterns are also available.
www.spaundrums.com



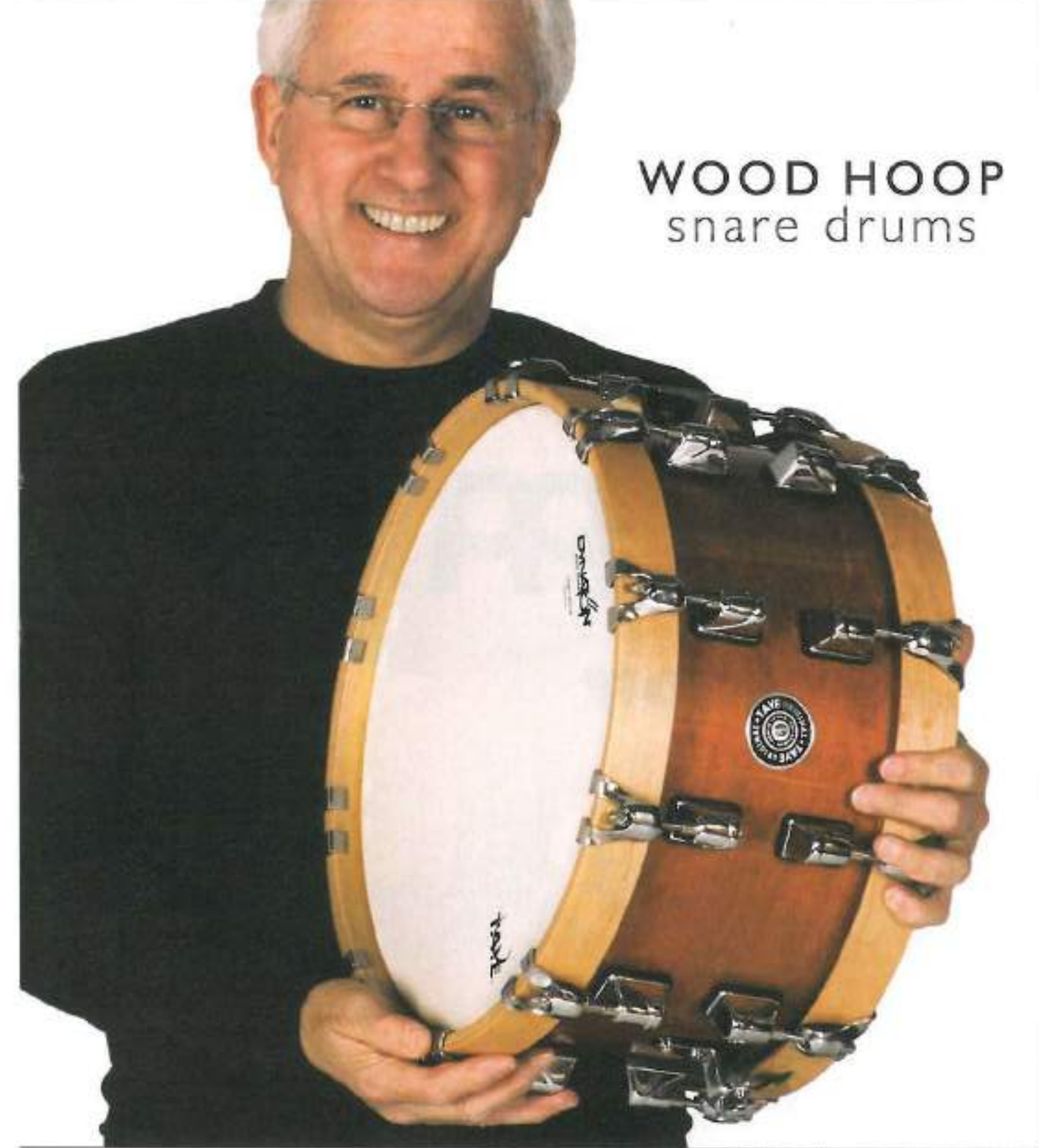
Italy's **TAMBURO** offers a full range of drumkits, from Ash entry-level models to the hand-crafted stave-shell Opera series shown here.
www.tamburodrums.com

This hypnotic drum-and-drumhead finish gives evidence of **TRUTH**'s graphic creativity.
www.truthdrums.com

This 6x14 brushed aluminum snare drum with die-cast hoops and tube lugs is new from **WORLDMAX**. List price is $629.95.
www.worldmax.com

WUHAN brass-shell snare drums feature shock-mounted tube lugs, 8-lug 2.3-mm hoops, quick throw-offs, and Attack drumheads. List price is $199.
www.universalpercussion.com

A new design in **ZENITH**'s Acclaim student-level series features an attachment that lets the regular drums be instantly inverted to provide mesh-head surfaces for quiet practice.
(909) 923-2017



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Cymbals

MEINL's new Mb10 series is the first ever made of Mb10 bronze alloy, which is said to offer powerful projection, warm sound characteristics, and well-balanced frequencies. The Jason Bittner Bell Blast Ride is the flagship model.

▲ New in Meinl's Mb20 series is the Chris Adler Pure Metal Ride, designed with a rock-sized bell, extreme heavy weight, and a high-polished finish for outstanding sound qualities in loud music settings. **www.meinlcymbals.com**

PAISTE's Alpha series has been completely re-worked for enhanced sonic range and more musical versatility (with no increase in price). The cymbals are manufactured using a combination of hi-tech and traditional methods. ▶

▲ New in Paiste's 2002 series are Wild crashes (in 17", 18", 19", and 20" sizes) and Paperthin cymbals (in 16", 18", and 20" sizes). The Wild crashes feature a roaring character for rock, punk, and metal applications. The Paperthins have a velvety, shimmering character for acoustic, hand-percussion, and suspended-cymbal use.
www.paiste.com

The HHX Legacy line from **SABIAN** was created in collaboration with Dave Weckl. The cymbals' "Tone Texture" offers a deep, dark contrast to the bright sound of Dave's Evolution series. The innovative Ozone ride has holes cut into half the cymbal to reduce mass and create a dark, washy sound.

Sabian's 16" and 18" AAX El Sabor Picante Hand Crashes feature raw, non-hammered bells said to be excellent for playing the clavé. The unlathed, medium-weight center area provides a dry ride sound. And the lathed, extra-thin outer half is highly responsive for slapping hot, shimmering sounds by hand. **www.sabian.com**

The K Custom Hybrid series from **ZILDJIAN** was designed with Japanese drum star Akira Jimbo. It combines elements of existing K Custom cymbals with special lathing and sizes, and other innovative features to provide drummers with several different sound capabilities. Prices include $176 for a 9" splash, $462 for a 20" ride, and $516 for a pair of 13 1/2" hi-hats.

Zildjian's ZHT cymbals are crafted from an alloy that is 88% copper and 12% tin. The higher tin content is said to provide additional mid- and low-end frequency output for enhanced musicality, as well as an exceptional appearance.
www.zildjian.com

Though known for "jazz" lines like their Traditional series, **BOSPHORUS** also has the Gold series for pop and rock drummers.
www.bosphoruscymbals.com

ISTANBUL AGOP's Collector's Series 2006 22" ride comes in two versions. The Jazz Bell ride features a small, flat bell for a low fundamental pitch, defined stick definition, and controlled wash. The Original Bell ride is said to offer a dark ride sound and a strong, clear bell sound. List price for each is $679.
www.istanbulcymbals.com

A rough-hewn character is part of the visual and sonic appeal of **MASTERWORK** cymbals from Turkey.
www.masterworkcymbal.com

Canada's **MOUNTAIN RYTHYM** now offers Dream cymbals, in Energy (high-volume, bright), Contact (darker, open sound), and Bliss (thin, light, responsive) series. The Chinese-made cymbals offer musicality and affordability.
www.mountainrythym.com

Brazil's **ORION CYMBALS** is aiming their Strondo series at the rock market. The line includes heavy crashes, a 20" heavy ride, and 15" hi-hats (with a unique notched bottom cymbal) designed to provide clear, cutting power.
www.orioncymbals.com

The Alt series is one of four lines from new Turkish cymbalmakers **TRK**. It's designed with a raw bell and micro-lathed surface to be stronger, brighter, and more responsive than conventional midrange cymbals.
www.trxcymbals.com

The unfinished appearance of **SOULTONE**'s Inferno series contributes to the raw, earthy sound of these Turkish-made cymbals.
www.soultonecymbals.com

Percussion

GON BOPS California Series congas and bongos now offer Natural or Cherry finishes that display the grain of the oak wood. The drums are made to order, but have much shorter lead times than lacquer finish options.

Alex Acuña's signature cajon from Gon Bops is hand-crafted in his Peruvian homeland. It features dovetail joints, hand-selected solid wood construction, and a durable lacquer finish with a hand-rubbed oil front for enhanced playability. The 18x14x12 cajon lists for $219.99.

Gon Bops' Tumbao series cowbells feature the slip-resistant V-clamp system, which accommodates a variety of L-arms and rod sizes from 9 mm to $^1/_2$". The heavy-gauge steel bells are available in alto cha-cha, cha-cha, timbale, and Rock models priced from $29.99 to $48.99.
www.gonbops.com

GOPE hand drums are handmade in Brazil, using carefully selected Brazilian woods. An exclusive gluing process is designed to leave no marks, and to make the drums capable of withstanding adverse conditions.
www.gope.net

LATIN PERCUSSION has given a facelift to the LP Classic, Matador Custom, Matador, and Aspire lines. The drums feature finishes from organic shades to spacey hues.

Raul Rekow's new LP signature wood conga shells are wrapped with a vibrant tiger print finish accented with a hint of gold glitter. The drums also feature gold Comfort II Rims and matching LP side plates.

In addition to two sizes of Giovanni Compact Congas, LP now offers Giovanni Compact Bongos. Stands are available for both sets of instruments.

LP's One Shot Studio shakers are said to emit delicate, crisp, mic'-friendly tones that record without stridency or signal clipping.
www.lpmusic.com

MEINL PERCUSSION's Samba Series now includes a surdo with legs, allowing it to be added to a percussionist's stage setup.

The Conga Cajon and Bongo Cajon combine aspects of the different instruments to give players more musical versatility and positioning options.

www.meinlpercussion.com

PEARL PERCUSSION's new Folkloric Percussion series offers traditional Afro-Cuban instruments, including oak congas and bongos, as well as gourd shakers. The instruments are designed to be true to their heritage while featuring modern acoustic innovations to aid in playing and recording.

Pearl's Brazilian line includes repiniques, pandeiros, tamborims, cuicas, and a new instrument called a pandanza. It combines elements of a pandeiro with those of an agogo bell to create a variety of new sounds.

This guataca from Pearl is an unusual accessory instrument based on a garden hoe. The blade can be struck with the included metal striker for a bell-like tone, while the scalloped edge can be scraped.

www.pearldrum.com

This striking Molten Sea finish is now available on **REMO**'s Poncho Sanchez signature series congas and Valencia series bongos.

www.remo.com

RHYTHM TECH's FT Pro tambourine boasts a thin, ergonomic handle, more efficient placement of the jingles, improved balance, a resilient rubber playing edge, a choice of stainless steel or brass jingles, and an integrated mounting system. List price is $59.95.

Rhythm Tech's new Performer and Studio percussion pre-packs contain assortments of studio-quality accessory percussion instruments to serve in a variety of live and recorded musical situations. Both packs also include free value-added merchandise.
www.rhythmtech.com

TOCA's Limited Edition Firestorm congas and bongos feature Asian oak shells, top-grade bison heads, Easy-Play rims, and a high-gloss finish set off by gold titanium vacuum-plated hardware. The high-end drums are fitted with countersunk carriage-bolt hardware for a sleek look.

Light, resonant Toca Dual Doumbeks are designed to project clearly over contemporary amplification. The drums are fitted with synthetic heads to facilitate the wide frequency range inherent in doumbeks. Their high-gloss Grey Frost finish is accented with polished chrome hardware.
www.tocapercussion.com

The shape of Toca's Graphix Globe shakers make them easy to grasp and shake. They feature unique sonic properties, as well as vivid Torch, Reaper, and Spaceman graphics. Graphix Tube Shakers in 8" and 10" sizes are also available.

Instead of a normal tuning with a gradual change in pitch from bar to bar, **TREEWORKS**' new double-row ZenTree moves with stair-stepped groups of chimes. This tuning is said to create a soothing and mystic sweep when played from high to low. List price is $220.
www.treeworkschimes.com

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Electronics

HART DYNAMICS states that their new D-Trig high-definition modular drum trigger/computer interface allows for faster triggering than with direct plug-in to a sound module. It allows drummers to use a computer or DAW as "the most powerful drum module to date."
www.D-Trig.com

KORG's BeatLab digital metronome makes it easy for drummers and percussionists to practice a variety of rhythms and styles. Players can use preprogrammed rudiments or user-programmable rhythms. List price is $150.
www.korg.com

PINTECH's Accustech drumkit features full-size drums with distinctive finishes, mesh heads, and internal triggers.
www.pintechworld.com

ROLAND's TD-6SX V-Tour kit is designed to offer the playability of an advanced V-Drum set in an affordable package. It combines the TD-6V Percussion Sound Module with a dual-trigger 10" mesh-head snare V-Pad, 8" mesh tom pads, and the CY-12R/C V-Cymbal with separate bell triggering for the ride. List price is $3,399.

The HandSonic 10 (HPD-10) offers the same pad response as Roland's original HandSonic, but with a specialized set of features and a fresh batch of sounds, rhythms, effects, and internal metronome features.

Roland's new RT-10K (kick), RT-10S (snare), and RT-10T (tom) triggers are physically smaller than their predecessors for easier positioning. They also feature new trigger-sensing technology for improved response.
www.rolandus.com

Hardware

CANOPUS is addressing drummers' needs for lightweight contemporary hardware with their new Hybrid series. The thrones and stands use a combination of steel and aluminum to provide strength and portability.
www.canopusdrums.com

GIBRALTAR's Workstation throne includes a detachable stick bag, towel, and water bottle holder placed conveniently within the drummer's reach. The double-braced tripod features spindle height adjustment with memory lock and Gibraltar's Super Feet. List price is $169.99.

Gibraltar's new Totally Chrome & Totally Curved Road Series rack features curved vertical and crossbar support tubes, and is outfitted with chrome-plated clamps. List price is $519.99.

The Intruder bass drum pedal from Gibraltar has been upgraded with a balanced footboard, a curved frame for support and rigidity, an aluminum fixed stabilizer rock plate, independent beater angle and footboard height adjustments, and a side-mounted hoop clamp. Single pedals list for $189.79; double pedals for $450.79.
www.gibraltar.com

ROLLINGRISER offers collapsible, portable drum riser units in a variety of sizes and heights. The units come in a grey-black finish as standard, but can also be customized to match the color of a drummer's kit.
www.rollingriser.com

TRICK's Pro 1-V bass drum pedal system uses aerospace materials and precision CNC machining to take the compression-spring pedal concept to a new level for function and adjustability. It comes equipped with a fully adjustable beater that's also available separately.
www.trickdrums.com

Drumsticks

PRO-MARK's newest Autograph stick model is the Jason Bittner 5BX.

▲ Also new from Pro-Mark are MJZ maple models designed for jazz and other light playing.
www.promark.com

◀ **REGAL TIP**'s 2BX has a diameter of .625", a length of 16 1/4", and a large acorn-shaped tip for maximum sound and response. The stick was created to have excellent balance for hard hitters.

The **VATER** Monster Brush's large rubber grip holds a bundle of wavy polymer strands that can be adjusted with an O-ring for a brush-like sound or a fat backbeat, without a lot of volume.

▲ Vater's Nude Series features 5A, 5B, and Power 5B models in wood ($12.45) and nylon ($12.90) tip. The unfinished sticks have a comfortable sanded grip for drummers who have problems with stick slippage due to hand sweat while performing.
www.vater.com

The Regal Tip Revolution Timbale stick starts with a 5B-style grip and gradually tapers down to .385" at the end. It can be turned around for use as a cowbell beater, or played on a drumkit by drummers who want a beefy grip and full, fat-sounding tip without the added weight of a rock stick.
www.regaltip.com

◀ **XCEL** is a new brand of sticks that feature a variety of unique contours, grips, and adjustable balance systems.
www.xceldrumsticks.com

Steve Gadd brushes ($32) from **VIC FIRTH** help drummers avoid the problem of snagging on new coated drumheads, by employing slightly angled wires. The retractable brushes have soft rubber handles, light-gauge wire, and two lock-in playing positions.

Vic Firth's Steve Smith Tala Wands ($24.98) feature foam centers surrounded with bamboo or birch dowels wrapped in thin PVC. They're said to provide outstanding balance and rebound while producing a lower volume.

ZILDJIAN's Taylor Hawkins stick ($14.40) is similar to a 5B, but features a larger, more rounded tip for full tone and projection. The stick carries Taylor's signature and Hawk tattoo artwork.

Zildjian's Mezzo 1 has seven dowels around a larger center dowel, for a bright, focused tone and a cohesive feel. The Mezzo 2 has nineteen smaller dowels for a wider, more delicate sound. Each lists for $24.96.
www.zildjian.com

HOT STICKS can now produce sticks with virtually any custom graphic imaginable. The sticks are now being distributed by Fender.
hotstix@bellsouth.net

Vic Firth's new Steve Jordan Signature stick ($14) is designed for great touch and sound around the drums and cymbals. The hickory stick is 16½" long and .625" in diameter, with a rounded barrel tip.
www.vicfirth.com

Drumheads

AQUARIAN Power Thin heads are single-ply models that feature an ultra-thin layer of Power Dot material on the top, the bottom, or both (depending on model). The heads are said to be extremely durable while maintaining an open, sustained sound.
www.aquariandrumheads.com

EVANS' EMAD 2 bass drum batter features films of different thicknesses and types to produce enhanced attack, with a denser tone and a sturdier feel than the single-ply EMAD. Clear and coated versions are available in sizes 18" to 24", priced from $71 to $85.

▲ The Evans marching line now includes MX Frost Tenor drumheads and MX2 White Bass drumheads.
www.evansdrumheads.com

REMO's PowerMax pre-muffled marching bass drum head is said to provide a powerful yet controlled bass drum sound without the need for external muffling. It features ultra-white film and a free-floating internal muffling ring.

RMV's Deep heads feature two plies of pure white film with an internal overtone control system for a deep, focused sound. They're mounted in a crimped aluminum hoop with a steel insert ring. The heads are offered in 8" to 18" tom-tom sizes.
www.rmvdrums.com

◀ Also new from Remo are Nuskyn Mondo and tucked heads for djembes. They're said to feel more like natural skin heads, and to produce a shorter sustain than Remo's FiberSkyn models.
www.remo.com

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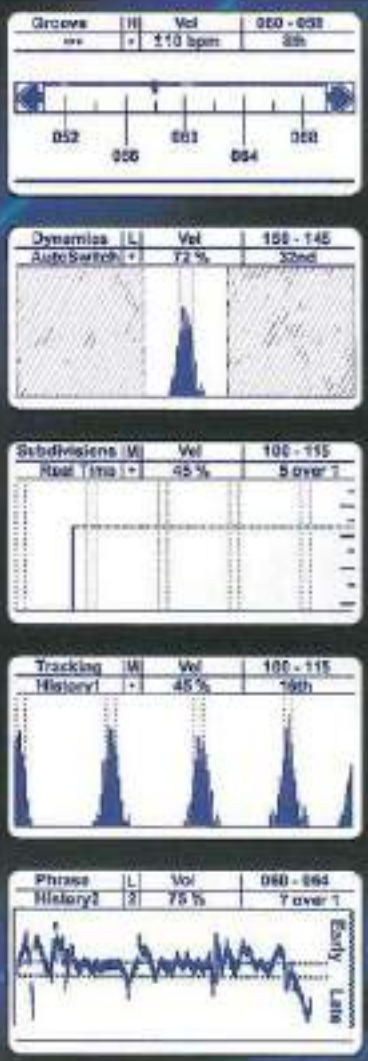

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Accessories

Want that "skater punk" sound? Try **DANMAR**'s UFO Skate Beater. It's made from a genuine Flip skate wheel.
www.danmarpercussion.com

New drum bags with stylish flame artwork are available from **GATOR CASES**. The durable 600-Denier nylon drum bags feature 10 mm–thick internal padding, as well as comfortable carrying straps. Bags come in Standard and Fusion sets.
www.gatorcases.com

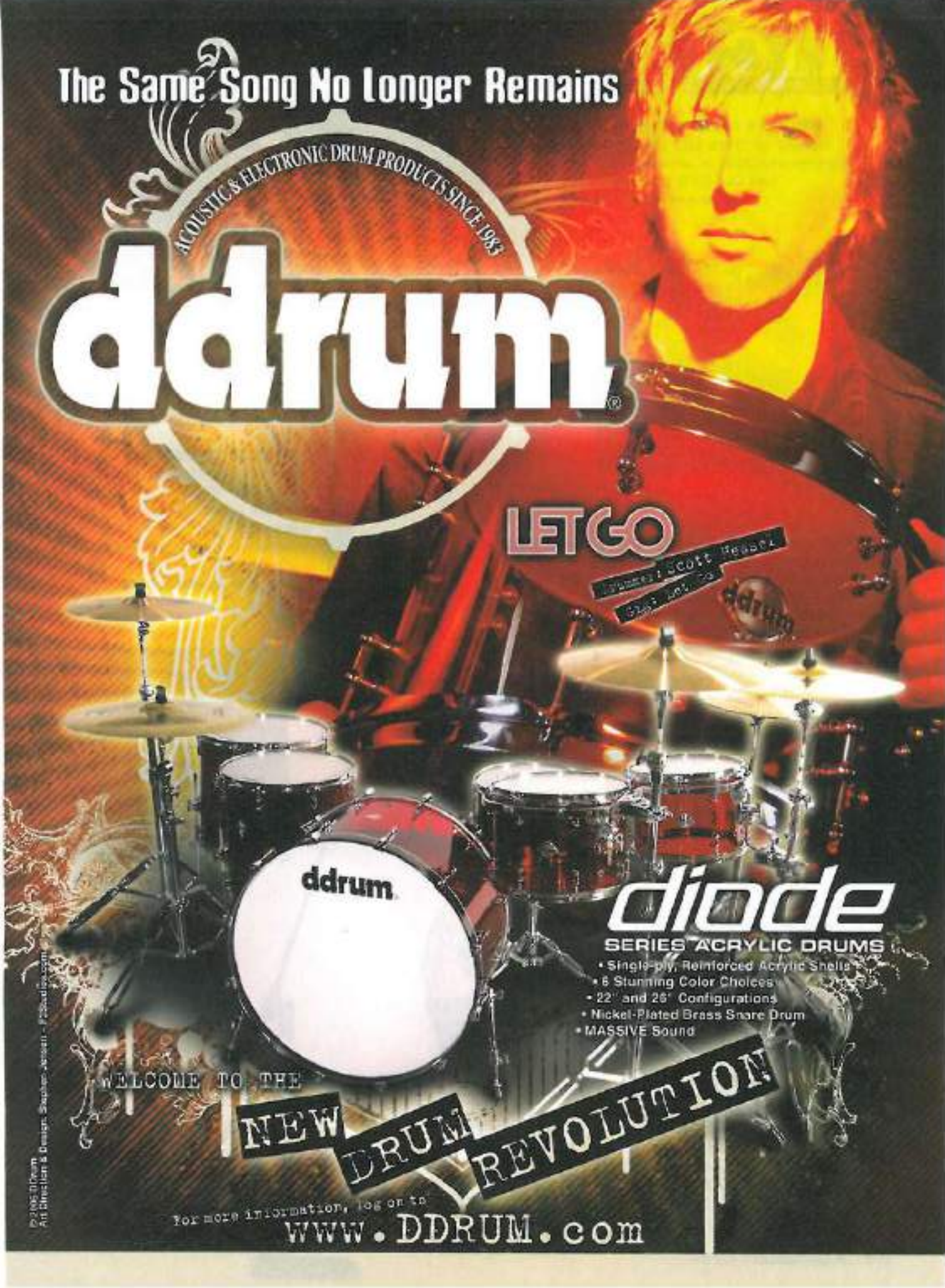
The **PURESOUND** Metrix series offers high-quality snare wires at an economical price point. The 20-, 30-, and 40-strand 14" models feature custom-designed end plates and specially formulated steel-alloy wires. List prices range from $15.95 to $19.95.
www.puresoundpercussion.com

A new drum-rack case in **XL SPECIALTY PERCUSSION**'s Protechtor series is specially shaped to permit minimum breakdown of rack legs and crossbars.

ZILDJIAN's Cindy Blackman Artist Collection stick bag ($44.95) features an electric blue exterior highlighted with "Cindy Blackman" and "Zildjian" logo patches. The interior is lined in ultra-plush black material. The bag has two full-zipper pockets on the exterior and two large interior utility pockets.

The Tommy Lee bag ($39.95) features a Desert Camouflage motif highlighted by Tommy's "TL" logo and five-point star. The durable polyester bag has a large center stick pocket, utility pockets, and dual tie cords.
www.zildjian.com

Also from XL is The Claw, a spring-loaded quick-release stick and mallet holder for marching drums.
www.xlspec.com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Microphones

APEX is a new brand offering a wide variety of drum and percussion mic's. They're available in several drum packs, like the DP-3 pack shown here.
www.apexelectronics.com

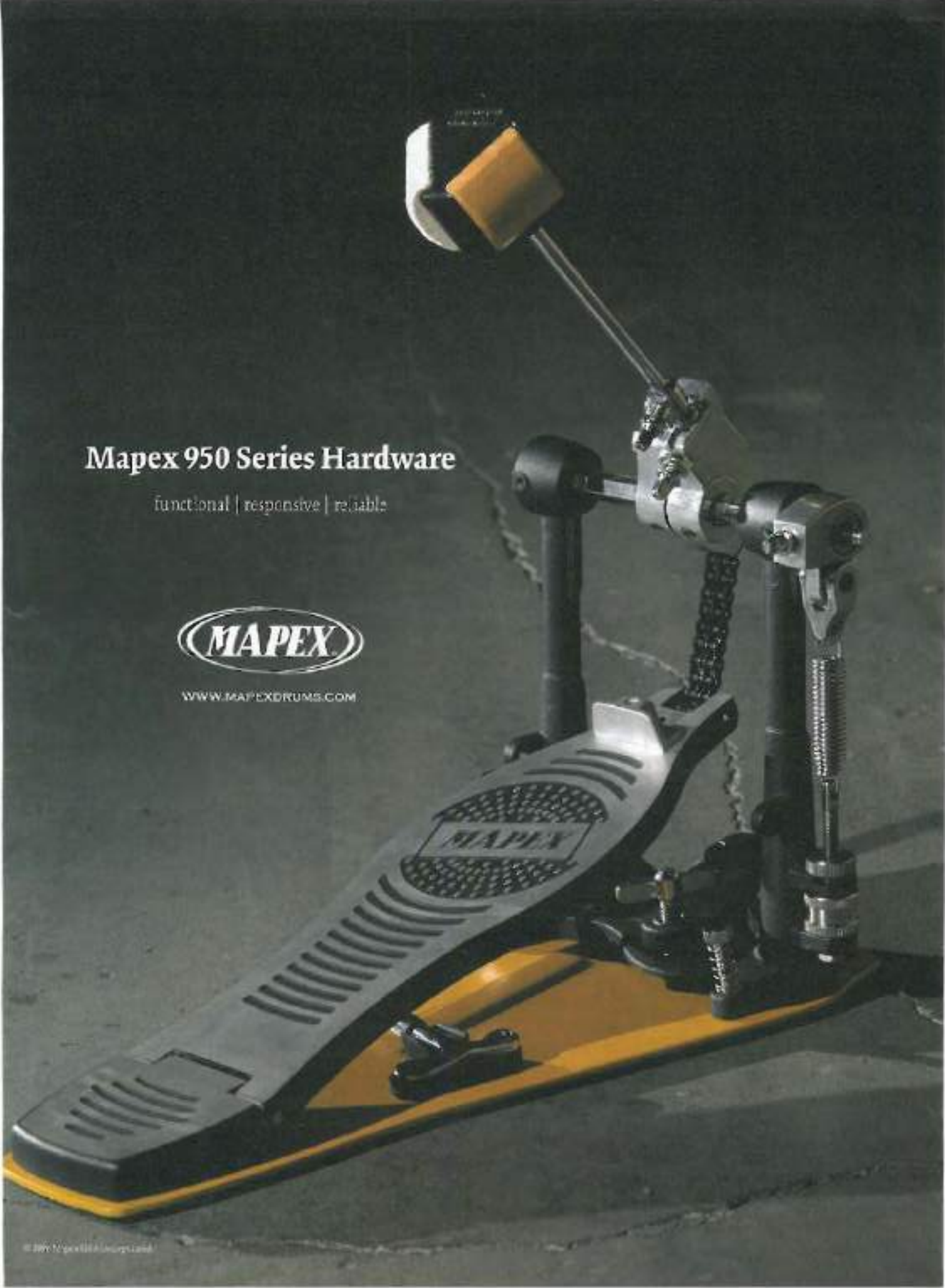
AUDIX has expanded its line of DP-Series mic' packages with four-, five-, six-, and eight-piece packs designed to fit a variety of needs and price points. The DP Series was developed for professional live sound, recording, and broadcast applications. All packages include an aluminum road case.

BEYERDYNAMIC has two new Tourgroup dynamic mic's. The TG-X 48 is an all-purpose vocal and instrument mic'. The TG-X 47 is especially suitable for use on snare drums.
www.beyerdynamic.com

The Audix MicroBoom is a 50" carbon-fiber boom arm that attaches to any microphone stand. It weighs only 2 1/2 ounces and is designed for use with Audix's Micro series of miniature condenser microphones, many of which have drum-miking applications.
www.audixusa.com

CAD's e70 Equitek dual-capsule pencil condenser is a wide-range mic' that can be used in overhead cymbal and percussion applications. List price is $249.
www.cadmics.com

The In/Ex Blender Module FROM **RANDALL MAY INTERNATIONAL** blends internal May microphone signals with any external microphone, allowing complete control of the drum sound. It's recommended for use on snare drums and on kick drums with woofers.
www.randallmay.com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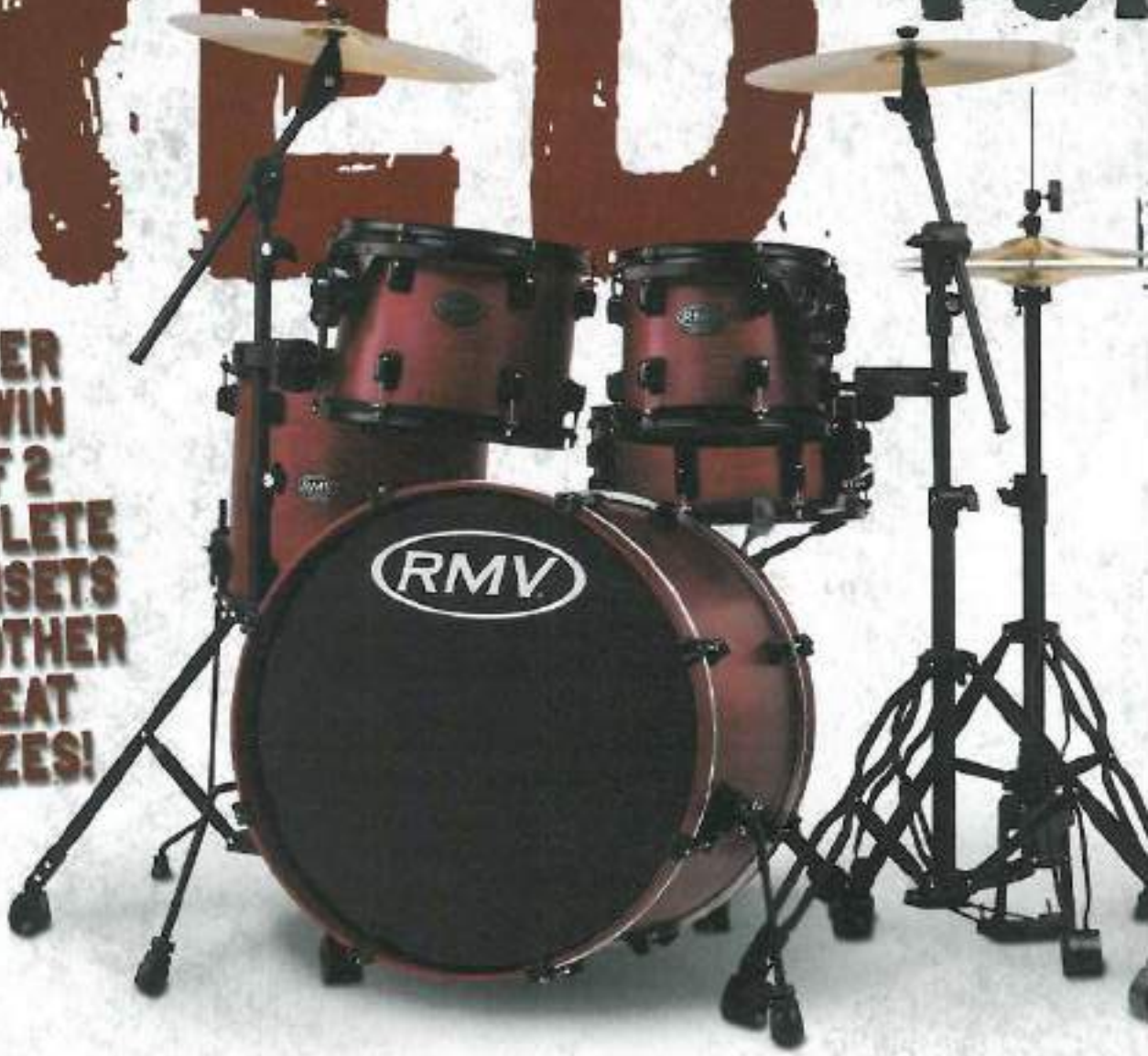

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RED vs. BLUE CONTEST PRIZES

	1st Prize (x1)	2nd Prize (x1)	3rd Prize (x3)
RMV Drums	Wild Cherry "X5" 5-pc. drumkit	Deep Blue "X5" 5-pc. drumkit	5.5x10" accessory snare drum
TRX Cymbals	MDM Series 22" ride, 14" hi-hats, 16" and 18" crashes	ALT Series 21" ride, 14" hi-hats, 16" and 18" crashes	
Evans Drumheads	Power Center, EC2, EMAD2 heads & accessories	Power Center, EC2, EMAD2 heads	Power Center, EMAD2 heads
Pro-Mark Sticks	12-pair American Hickory drumsticks (winner's choice) with his/her Autograph imprinted on them		
Audix Mic's	"Fusion 7" Drum Mic pre-pack	"Fusion 7" Drum Mic pre-pack	
Humes & Berg Cases	A set of Enduro drum cases	A set of Galaxy drum bags	Galaxy snare drum bag
Rhythm Tech Percussion	Drumset Percussion Pack, including: a DST Tambourine, Moonblock, Bar Chimes, 5" and 8" Studio Cowbell, DSM2 mounts (x2) and "Turn It Up & Lay It Down" CD Vol. 3		DST Drumset Tambourine
Puresound Snare Wires	14" Custom, Super and Equalizer wires	14" Custom, Super and Equalizer wires	14" Custom wires
Puresound Speedball Beaters	Felt, Rubber and Plastic BD beaters	Felt, Rubber and Plastic BD beaters	Felt BD beater
Hudson Music	Assortment of DVDs and books	Assortment of DVDs and books	Assortment of DVDs and books

puresound RhythmTech RMV TRX

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1. To enter online, visit www.moderndrummer.com between the dates below and look for the RMV Re6 Contest button or send a 3.5" x 5.5" or 4" x 6" postcard with your name, address, email address, and telephone number to: MD/RMV Re6 Contest, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. **2.** Enter as often as you wish via postcard, but each entry must be mailed separately. **3.** ODDS OF WINNING DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED. 4. CONTEST BEGINS 5/1/06 AND ENDS 7/31/06. POSTCARDS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY 7/31/06 AND RECEIVED BY 8/4/06. **5.** Prize Drawing: Winners will be selected by random drawing on August 10, 2006. Winner will be notified by phone or email on or about August 15, 2006. **6.** Employees and their immediate families of Modern Drummer, Audix, Drums For North America, Evans Drumheads (J. D'Addario Co.), Hudson Music, Humes & Berg, Pro-Mark, Puresound Percussion, Rhythm Tech, RMV, TRX and their affiliates are ineligible. **7.** Sponsor is not responsible for lost, misdirected, and/or delayed entries. **8.** Open to residents of the US and Canada. 18 years of age or older. Void in Quebec, Canada, and where prohibited by law. **9.** 1st Prize – one (1) winner will receive a 5 piece RMV "X5" drumkit in Wild Cherry, a 4 piece set of TRX MDM Series cymbals, an assortment of Evans drumheads and accessories, 12 pairs of Pro-Mark sticks, an Audix Fusion 7 Drum Mic pre-pack, a 5 piece set of Humes & Berg Enduro drum cases, a Drumset Percussion Pack from Rhythm Tech, Puresound snare wires and bass drum beaters, and 3 DVDs and 2 books from Hudson Music. Approximate retail price: $5,221. 2nd Prize – One (1) winner will receive a 5 piece RMV "X5" drumset in Deep Blue, a 4 piece set of TRX ALT Series cymbals, an assortment of Evans drumheads, 12 pairs of Pro-Mark sticks, an Audix Fusion 7 Drum Mic pre-pack, a 5 piece set of Humes & Berg Enduro drum cases, a Drumset Percussion Pack from Rhythm Tech, Puresound snare wires and bass drum beaters, and 3 DVDs and 2 books from Hudson Music. Approximate retail price: $5,221. 3rd prize – Three (3) winners will each receive a 5.5"X10" RMV Accessory Snare Drum, an assortment of Evans drumheads, a Humes & Berg Galaxy Snare Drum Bag, a Rhythm Tech DST Drumset Tambourine, Puresound Custom snare wires and felt bass drum beater, and 3 DVDs and 2 books from Hudson Music. Approximate retail price: $905 (each). Approximate retail value of all prizes: $13,157. **10.** Sponsored by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, (973) 239-4140. 11. This game subject to the complete Official Rules. For a copy of the complete Official Rules or the winner's name, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Modern Drummer Publications/RMV Re6 Contest/Official Rules/Winners List, 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

Bill Bruford
Shedding In The Woods

by T. Bruce Wittet

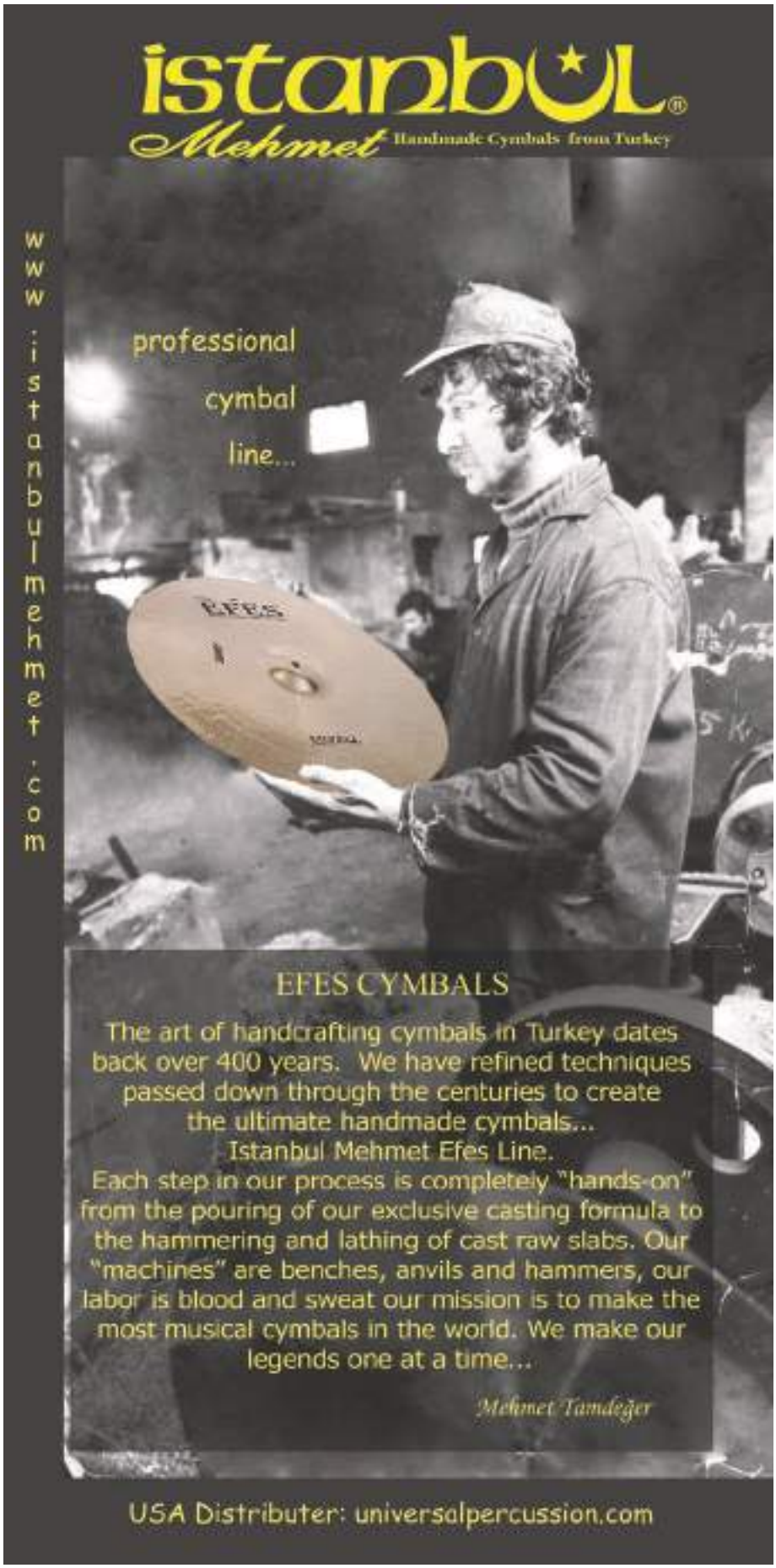
When Bill Bruford drives the thirty-five miles back from a late London club date to his home in what he calls "leafy Surrey," he might not hit the sack immediately. The acclaimed drummer for Yes and King Crimson and founder of the jazz fusion ensemble Earthworks might get an idea for a composition. So he'll head through living and dining rooms to his adjacent addition—his drum room—and close the heavy door. Then he'll boot up the computer and don headphones.

What Bruford probably won't do at that time of night is play acoustic drums. Not that it would bother the neighbors at the other end of his two-acre property. But Bill's wife might be sleeping. If it were daylight, there'd be no problem. "My wife's always hearing me practice drums," says Bill. "She's probably thinking, He *still* can't play that triplet figure!" Apparently even drumming stars have to be considerate of family members.

When Bill installed his office/practice space/rehearsal studio at the rear of his house, he installed substantial double-glazed windows and rudimentary sound-blocking materials. But, as Bill admits, "I should have insulated the adjoining wall

more. On the other hand, there's lots of space leading to the kitchen and the rooms at the other end of the house. Noise isn't usually a problem."

Welcome to Bill Bruford's inner sanctum. In this moderate-sized room, he administers his record labels Summerfold and Winterfold, rehearses various ensembles, and, yes, practices drums daily. It's all very much how you'd imagine it, Mr.



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Bill Bruford

Bruford taking his tea in a heritage building built in 1894, set against a hill in a wooded area. Bill explains, "I've actually extended the rear of the house into a hill. It was easy; I didn't have to drill into rock. My space has its own entrance, so unwashed musicians can get their equipment through the big double doors without bothering anybody in the house. All my bands work out here. They come down here and I serve good coffee. It saves paying London rates."

Bill lists the contents of his music room: "I have a biggish desk, computers, way too many CDs—all the usual stuff and claptrap a musician owns. I have two drumsets, both Tamas. One is kind of facing my desk. I use this kit for the odd student who might drop by, although that's not often since I live a ways out. It's a regular kit with high tom, low tom, bass, snare, two cymbals, and a hi-hat. Then I have my own, slightly mis-configured set. It has an 18" bass drum, two toms on the right, two toms on the left, two cymbals on the right, two on the left, and the hi-hat in the center—a mirror image, so to speak."

Although Bill's room is ideal for small bands to rehearse in, it's also perfect for solo practice. The drummer admits, "I practice the same sorts of things other people are trying to play halfway decently: triplet figures on the bass drum, for example, in unison with triplets with the left stick. I feel I'm right at the beginning, speaking of technique. Pablo Casals used to practice the D Major scale every day, which I understand is one of the easiest scales on cello. He was elderly and he was still trying to get the D Major scale right, which is where I'm at!"

While the room boasts some handsome equipment, conspicuous in its absence is recording gear. "I'm not really a recording guy," Bill explains,

"although I could throw something together to make demos. In my opinion there's only so many things you can do in a day, and, for me, recording isn't one of them."

When he sketches out his sonic ideas, he works with piano and mini sequences. "I use Sibelius on the computer," says Bill. "For sounds, I have a Korg 01R/W [combined keyboard and sound module]."

To some who have followed Bill through his explorations using the Simmons SDX electronic drum system, it might seem a little curious that today he's not up to his neck in Pro Tools and samplers. "I get into things pretty deep," Bill says, explaining his past addiction to electronics, "and then I leave them alone pretty deep. I played electronic drums between 1980 and 1995, then dumped them cold turkey and haven't touched any since."

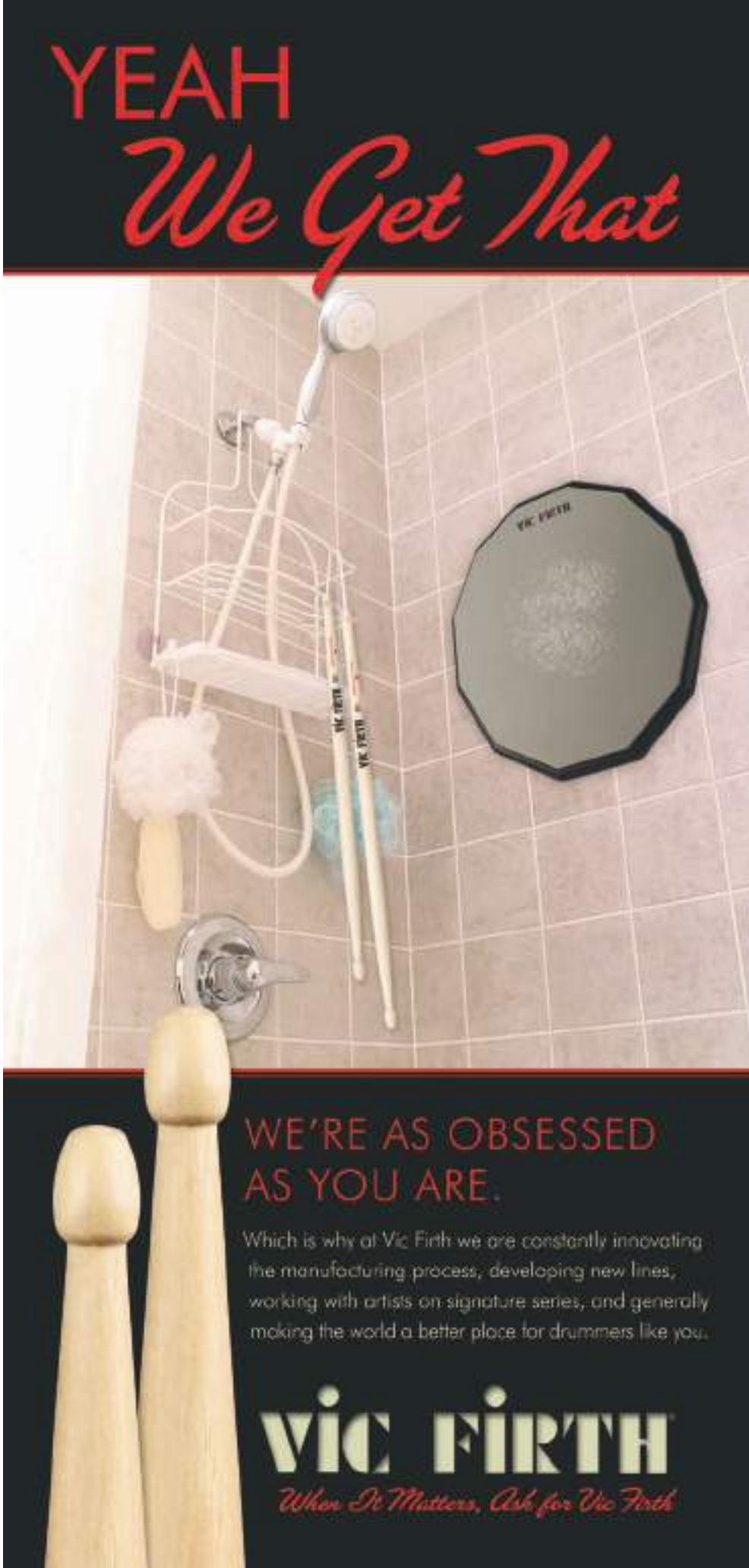
Some musicians balk at office work, but Bill has become quite good at running the record companies he founded to launch new releases and to archive his older work. Says Bill, "You record all these CDs in places as far off as Japan, and you lose track of them. My label has put them under one roof."

In fact, on Summerfold Records, Bill has just released *Bill Bruford/Tim Garland: Earthworks Underground Orchestra*, recorded live in the midtown Manhattan club Iridium. The music is dense—there were nine musicians on stage—and complex, and it swings, to boot. The drumming is typical Bill Bruford, lithe and nimble. Bill's not one of the sort of drummer/producers who pushes the drums in the mix. "When you're working with a large band," Bill explains, "and you've had only a three-hour rehearsal, you don't have time to be worrying about the bass drum sound. I set up the drums fast and there's no time for the usual drummer concerns. This album is jazz with diverse influences, including African, and there's a lot of odd-meter stuff. Call it big band acoustic fusion!"

Ideas for new projects germinate and take root in Bill's Surrey practice space. An example is the forthcoming CD, *World Drummers Ensemble*. It includes Chad Wackerman, Luis Conte, and Doudou N'Diaye Rose, a seventy-two-year-old master drummer from Senegal.

Bill is pleased with the way things have panned out. He gets to compose, rehearse, and manage his career without leaving home. It's not for everyone, admits Bill. "I have to work very long hours. This stuff is killing!"

For more info on Bill, visit www.billbruford.com.



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Dallas Drummer Makes a Splash at the World's Largest Drumming Competition

Showcasing his chops in front of more than 2,000 screaming fans and some of today's most prominent drummers, Dallas' Jamil Byrom was crowned the nation's best undiscovered drummer at Guitar Center's 2005 Drum Off Grand Finals. In addition to the Drum Off battle between six of the nation's top amateur drummers, Guitar Center brought on board The Bronx, mega-drummer Travis Barker (Blink 182, The Transplants), Adrian Young (No Doubt), and punk legends Bad Religion to create one of the drum community's most high-profile events.

Representing Dallas, Texas, 27-year-old Byrom started playing drums in church at the age of 13. Known for his smooth yet relaxed style, Byrom loves to play everything from funk to gospel to smooth jazz. Aside from connecting with the crowd, Jamil stood apart from the other five contestants with an improvised set of traditional jazz chops, seamless rolls and unique groove playing.

"I started to compete in Guitar Center's Drum Off competitions when I was 15, and it feels incredible to win," said Byrom. "It was amazing to share the stage with the other five contestants, not to mention Travis Barker and Adrian Young. With this recognition, Guitar Center has provided me with the opportunity to connect with bands and develop my career, which I hope leads to creating an instructional video."

Byrom was selected from more than 3,000 undiscovered drummers nationwide who participated in the four-tiered competition that began in August, 2005. According to the 15 judges, which included Taylor Hawkins (Foo Fighters), John Dolmayan (System of a Down), Dean Butterworth (Good Charlotte), Aron Willard (Angels & Airwaves), and Stephen Perkins (Jane's Addiction), Byrom excelled in the categories of originality, technique, style, stage presence and overall performance.

In addition to a 2006 Scion xB and the coveted title as the nation's top amateur drummer, Byrom took home a DW Collector series five-piece maple kit, a Gretsch Custom kit with Gibraltar rack system, a Zildjian Custom box set and cymbal bag, and endorsement deals from both Evans and Sabian, among other prizes.

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Steely Dan's

Donald Fagen

Challenging Drummers For Decades

by Ken Micallef

If you've ever wondered what the great drummers of the '70s and '80s sounded like, look no further than the million-selling catalog of Steely Dan. Before click tracks and Pro Tools ruled the earth, Steely Dan's Walter Becker and Donald Fagen captured profound analog performances from the best drummers in the biz. Jim Gordon, Jeff Porcaro, Bernard Purdie, Jim Keltner, Hal Blaine, Rick Marotta, Steve Jordan, Ed Greene, and Steve Gadd all made high marks with Steely Dan.

With the celebrated duo's return to form on 2000's Grammy-winning *Two Against Nature*, it's as if the sardonic bards of jazz pop never left. Using Ricky Lawson and Keith Carlock for most of their last two releases, Steely Dan typically demanded the best. Of course, Fagen's solo albums have been equally flush with great drumming. His latest, *Morph The Cat*, pulls deep skank grooves and scintillating stick work from, once again, the mighty Keith Carlock.

What does it take to play with Steely Dan? "It does require a lot of technique," Donald Fagen responds from his Upper East Side home in New York. "But I do look for feel first. I have a hard time playing when things don't feel good. I grew up in the '50s and began playing in the '60s, and I tend to like a pretty

"I love all of the drummers we've played with in recent years. With players of this caliber, you're really talking about subtleties."

old-fashioned kind of swingy feel. A lot of guys who came up playing in the '80s tend to sit more on the beat than I like because they grew up practicing with drum machines. Keith Carlock doesn't sound like that. He has more of an old-school feel.

"That said, I love *all* of the drummers we've played with in recent years, and they all have the tools to play with us," Fagen adds. "With players of this caliber, you're really talking about subtleties."

Many Steely Dan tracks stand as both exceptional moments in music history and examples of intense drumming prowess. Becker and Fagen's zeal to get the best possible track has often pushed drummers to the brink of madness. But it's also resulted in amazing music that has more than held up through the years.

Steve Gadd's creative groove inventions and solo in "Aja" left many musicians speechless. Bernard Purdie provided some of the most rock-steady grooves ever in shuffle-inspired classics like "Babylon Sisters," "Home At Last," "Kid Charlemagne," and Caribbean meltdown "Everything You Did." The late Jeff Porcaro always excelled with the Dan, but never more so than on "Gaucho," "Doctor Wu," and "Black Friday," where his trademark shuffle burned like greased lightning. Becker's *11 Tracks Of Whack* featured the multi-talented Ben Perowsky, while Fagen's past solo albums have offered "hot licks and rhetoric" from Porcaro, Steve Jordan, and Leroy Clouden.

From the hyper double drumming of "Parker's Band" and the droll swing work of "Chain Lightning," to the frenetic jungle drumming of "I Got The News," Steely Dan has done drummers everywhere a favor for which we must all genuflect at the altar of the mysterious "Midnight Cruiser."

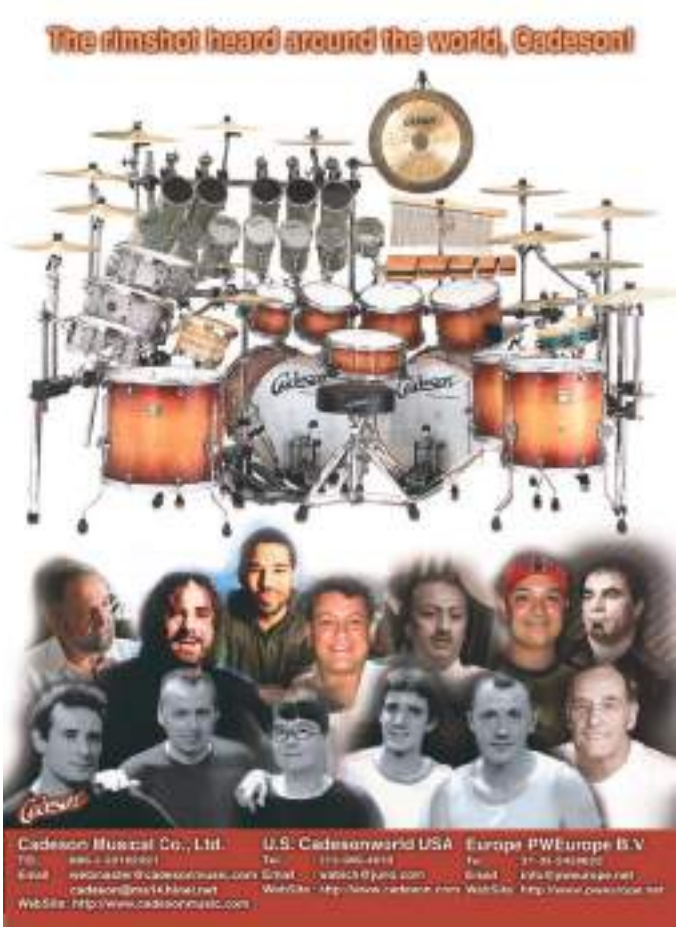
Ricky Lawson/Keith Carlock

Two Against Nature, Everything Must Go, Morph The Cat

"There is something about Keith's feel that I really like," Fagen begins. "He can sound really tight without sounding stiff. He's very natural-sounding, yet he's a great timekeeper.

"Ricky Lawson," Fagen continues, "who played on *Everything Must Go*, is a fantastic drummer. When he was playing with us on tour he tended to like to play with a click in his headphones, but we kept trying to tell him, 'When we play live we're not necessarily interested in having the time click-steady. We're more interested in the performance.' So for a while he wasn't doing it, but then he sneaked the phones back on. That's just what he was into then. This is back in 2000. I thought it gave his feel more of a clock-like, click feel. As I say, I don't know if he does that all the time, but he *is* a wonderful drummer.

"I think Keith may be more comfortable with improvisation overall," Fagen says. "He really comes more out of jazz in a way. But Ricky is a great soloist too, in a totally different style. That being the case, I'm only asking Keith to use a fraction of his drumming skills on *Morph The Cat*. But live, it's a different story. And as I said, he has more of an old-school feel. Keith sounds like he's playing from the swamp, 'cause he's *from* the swamp." [laughs]



Jim Hodder

Can't Buy A Thrill, Countdown To Ecstasy

"We had made a couple of records early on in Steely Dan, and they were good," Fagen says flatly. "But was it the music that we wanted to make? Was it fulfilling the vision we had in mind? We have to say, 'no.' We wanted a certain kind of New York sound. We loved Motown and Burt Bacharach, and those New York records, with producers like Jerry Ragovoy and Bert Berns. That's when we started trying to find session musicians who could get us what we were looking for, that New York soul sound. But Hodder was a very good drummer for those early records."

Jim Gordon

Pretzel Logic

"Jim was another swampy drummer," Fagen says. "He had a great, fantastic groove, very laid back and also very natural. We didn't do a million takes with Jim Gordon—and it wasn't necessary. We didn't do charts for him either. In those days, we did simpler tunes for the most part. We'd have a chart for the other players, but we would write out a structure chart, or usually get a bass and drums thing happening and go from there. Jim played on 'Rikki Don't Lose That Number' and on a lot of the other tunes from *Pretzel Logic*. He and Jeff Porcaro played double drums on 'Parker's Band.'

"Gordon had very good time, but he never sounded stiff. And of course he composed the coda to 'Layla,' which he was very proud of. I remember saying to him once, 'I loved the coda to 'Layla,'' and he said, 'Yeah, it goes like this,' and played it for me on piano."

Vinnie Colaiuta

Two Against Nature

"I only worked with Colauita twice," Fagen says, "and he was just great. He can do anything he wants to do."

Jeff Porcaro

Katy Lied, Pretzel Logic, Gaucho, The Nightfly

"Jim Gordon was a more laid-back drummer than Jeff Porcaro," Fagen offers. "Jeff was more of a poppy drummer, very crisp and on top of the beat. Porcaro's idol was Jim Keltner. He would watch Keltner very, very carefully. Porcaro was kind of a straightened-out Keltner, who was very eccentric—still is. So I always felt that he played like Keltner, but with the eccentricities corrected.

"I think Jeff was also more schooled. And he wasn't a loud player. He had a lighter touch. On *Katy Lied* we asked Jeff to pick up some figures, and we had some demos, so that by the time we did the actual recording, Jeff knew the tunes pretty well. Jeff was always a lot of fun, a great guy, and it was great to have him on the session because he added a lot of energy.

"Jeff also had an interesting personality. He was so good that, when he made a mistake or couldn't do something he wanted to do, he acted as if he couldn't believe it. It was beyond his comprehension that he couldn't do something he wanted to, so he would get frustrated with himself. If there was a producer or artist who kept giving him mixed signals or contradicted themselves, he would get frustrated and he could be a little ornery with them. He would ram

his sticks through his drumheads and walk out. That never happened with us, though. He was always a sweetheart."

Steve Gadd
Aja, Gaucho

"Everyone talks about Steve doing only one take for 'Aja' and nailing it, including the solo," Fagen says. "But as I remember it, we did two. As I recall we mostly used the first take and maybe we did an edit on a couple of bars, which wasn't because of the drums. But it was definitely 90% of the first take.

"As I recall, Steve was all business. And his sound was different from everybody else's. He had a particular sound that was very singular, especially at that time. His drum sound, and the way he played…it was as if a Tony Williams session had been transferred into the pop world. It was very new for popular music.

"Seems to me we thought Steve was the guy for the track when we wrote it. We wanted someone who had a lot of ease in soloing and someone who would do something unexpected during a long solo section. And we needed a good sight-reader who could just go in and burn it."

What about the infamous stick click in the solo? "I think Steve hit the mic' stand," Fagen says. "I assumed that, in the heat of the action, he hit something by mistake, but maybe he had a whole plan that I didn't even know about. [laughs] But when we're getting that level of performance from someone, that kind of stuff doesn't bother us in the least."

Bernard Purdie
Royal Scam, Aja, Gaucho

"On *Royal Scam,* we had been out in LA for some years, and even though we were using fine musicians—the LA session musicians, generally speaking—they were different from the New York musicians. People played lighter and with a different kind of pocket in LA. So we went back to New York and used Rick Marotta and Purdie. We combined the coasts, actually.

"Bernard is Bernard. He's a very aggressive player, and he kind of charges through life sometimes. We would have to explain stuff to him, and he might become impatient. He would do a first take and play it perfectly, before the keyboard and guitar players had the chords straightened out. But Bernard thought he was done. 'Well, that's it. Nice knowing you. Send me my check.' 'But Bernard,' we'd say, 'these guys need another take. That was just a run-through.' We would persuade him to do a couple more takes, and, of course, those would also be perfect.

"We never used clicks in those days. *The Royal Scam* is all Bernard. We had him come in a couple of years later and wanted him to play with a click, but he didn't like that at all. He resented the click, and it didn't work out. Bernard *is* a click. Bernard also used to really slam the drums. Ed Greene was another really loud drummer."

Jim Keltner
Aja

"Keltner found his part to 'Josie' within one or two takes," Fagen recalls. "He is a real artist, and quite unique. You can always tell his drumming from the first couple of bars. Keltner just has that kind of popping feel, with these strange fills that start in funny places. And sometimes he'll hit the side of the drums. Keltner's drums also look funny, the way he sets them up. He always looks like he's riding a chopper when he plays the drums, like he's on a motorcycle run to Fresno rather than actually playing drums.

Steve Jordan
The Nightfly

"The cut 'Walk Between The Raindrops' came about in a strange way," Fagen recalls. "It was one of the last tracks for *The Nightfly*. I had a demo where I played an electric piano to a click. I just put down this jump-type part. It had that old-fashioned feel, and I thought I could somehow overdub drums to it because it had that jumping feel in the bass. So we had Steve come in, and he understood it completely and nailed it. Once the drums were on, it ended up as a drum and keyboard track that I layered other parts over."

Dennis Chambers, Peter Erskine
Alive In America

"Dennis was very steady and *very* powerful live. He and Peter both appear on *Alive In America*. They were both very exciting drummers. We weren't recording when they played with us, and that's why they're not on any of the studio records. I guess we just like to experiment with different people."

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— JoJo Mayer

"The key to developing a good groove is to really understand what your role is as a drummer. For me, my role is to play for the song, not for myself."

— Zoro

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The Drummers Of Steely Dan

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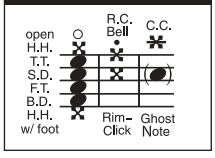
Phillip Halyard



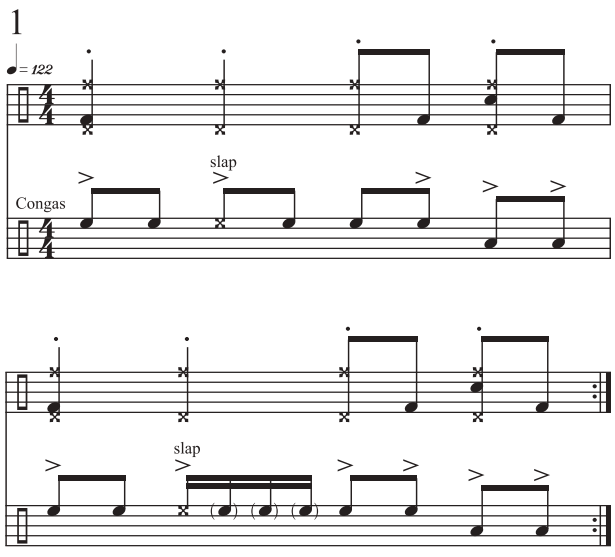
All of Steely Dan's albums are loaded with great drumming. Joining forces in the early '70s as leaders of a quirky rock band, Donald Fagen and Walter Becker gradually evolved the group's sound by increasingly relying on session players for subsequent recordings. By the late '70s, Fagen and Becker had become employers of the finest studio players that New York and Los Angeles had to offer.

All-time drumming giants like Jeff Porcaro, Jim Gordon, Bernard Purdie, Rick Marotta, Steve Gadd, Ed Greene, and Jim Keltner handled the high demands of Steely Dan sessions masterfully, producing some of their finest performances on record. When the band returned to the studio in 2000, a new generation of players, led by drummer Keith Carlock, was called to fill the hot seat. This month's *Off The Record* takes a look at one classic groove from each Steely Dan album.

"Do It Again"

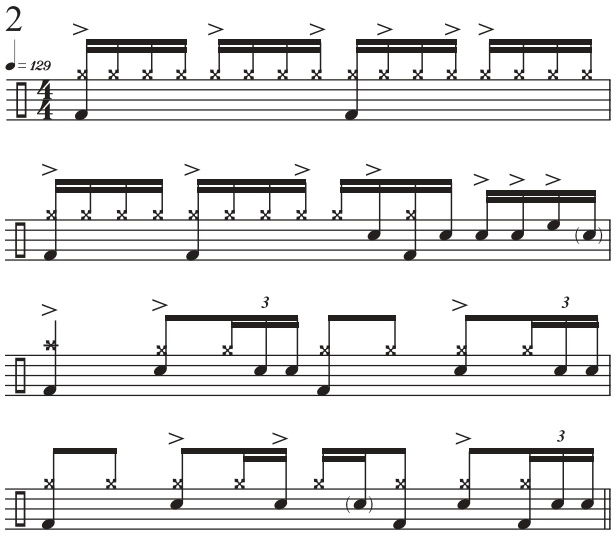
(from *Can't Buy A Thrill*, 1972)

Steely Dan's original drummer is often overlooked when compared to the talent the band would later employ. But Jim Hodder was a fine, tasteful player, which is demonstrated on the band's first hit with a simple driving groove that complements Victor Feldman's conga pattern. By not playing the snare on the second beat, Hodder allows the slap of the conga to come through. (0:00)



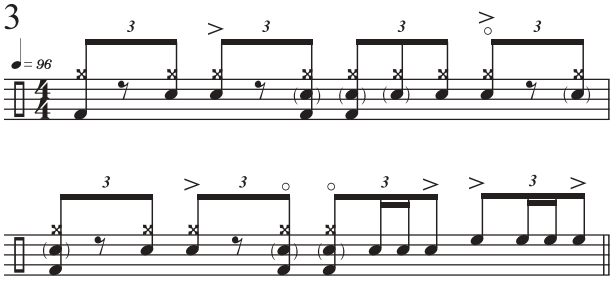
"King Of The World"

(from *Countdown To Ecstasy*, 1973)

One of Hodder's best grooves on the second Steely Dan album occurs on the final track. His Latin-tinged hi-hat intro gives way to a funky verse beat that features some excellent left-hand work. (0:23)

"Pretzel Logic"

(from *Pretzel Logic*, 1974)

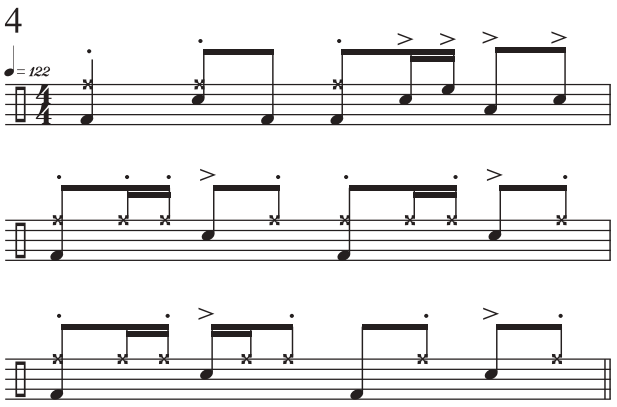
By their third album, Fagen and Becker began to augment the band's lineup with session players, including Jim Gordon and a young Jeff Porcaro on drums. (When the band did a brief tour behind this album, Porcaro and Jim Hodder played together on the tour.) The following two-handed shuffle shows the mature playing of a teenaged Porcaro. (0:16)



"Everyone's Gone To The Movies"

(from *Katy Lied*, 1975)

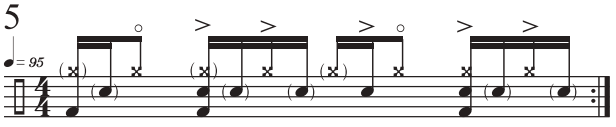
Jeff Porcaro is pictured as a bandmember on *Katy Lied* and plays on all but one of the album's tracks. On this tune, he gets to stretch out a little with a cymbal pattern that mirrors the syncopation of the keyboard solo. Notice how Jeff works the bell for effect. The first measure of this sequence includes a simple drum fill that became a signature for the drummer during this era of his career. (2:06)



"Kid Charlemagne"

(from *The Royal Scam*, 1976)

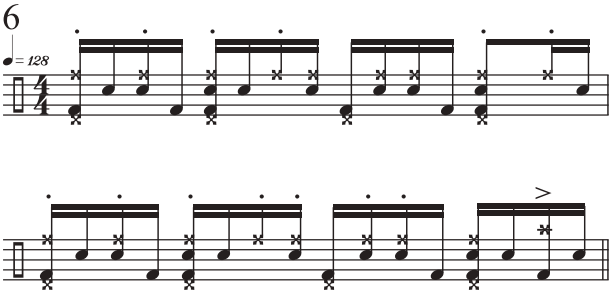
Steely Dan's fifth album moved in a decidedly funkier direction, and the groove of legendary R&B drummer Bernard Purdie became an asset. The opening track features Purdie retooling his classic drumbeat from Aretha Franklin's 1971 hit "Rock Steady." The magic of this groove lies in the contrast of the ghost notes against the heavy offbeat accents. (0:48)



"Aja"

(from *Aja*, 1977)

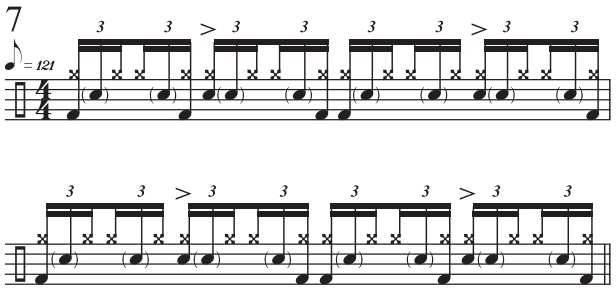
Steve Gadd's first piece of work for Steely Dan became *the* signature drum performance of the '70s. In this track, Fagen and Becker gave Gadd not one, but *two* drum solo spots. Example 6 is the groove Steve settles into after his second solo, as the song moves to a fade-out. Notice his wonderful snare and cymbal work over the samba kick pattern and how he picks up the offbeat accents in the music with his crash cymbal. (7:27)



"Babylon Sisters"

(from *Gaucho*, 1980)

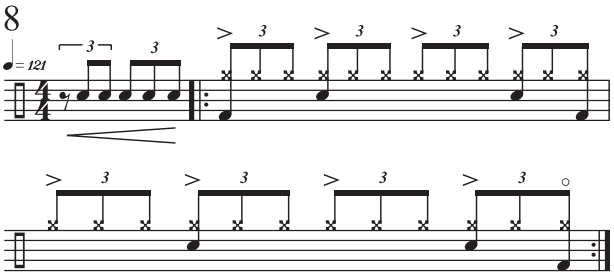
Another of Bernard Purdie's famous grooves (one that he liked to call his "Purdie Shuffle") graces the opening track of the last Steely Dan album from the band's first era. This groove is a textbook example of a rolling triplet shuffle, with the inside notes of the triplets being played as left-hand ghost notes. Other well-known examples of this pattern are Purdie's groove for "Home At Last" on the *Aja* album and Jeff Porcaro's drum track for Toto's "Rosanna." (0:53)



"Ruby Baby"

(from Donald Fagen's *The Nightfly*, 1982)

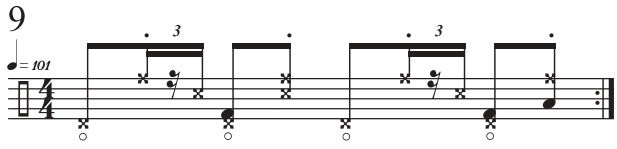
On Donald Fagen's first solo album, Jeff Porcaro demonstrated his mastery of the fast triplet groove with the following pattern. Jeff had first turned drummers' heads with a heavier version of this type of pattern on "Hold The Line," a hit from his band Toto's first album in 1978. (0:00)



"Negative Girl"

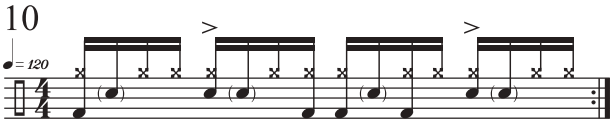
(from *Two Against Nature*, 2000)

After a twenty-year hiatus, the return of Steely Dan was big news. On this track, studio legend Vinnie Colaiuta finally got his chance to contribute to the band's catalog. And his performance of this reggae groove is breathtaking. Example 9 shows the pattern that he settles into during the guitar solo fade-out. Notice how Vinnie's splashed left-foot hi-hats alternate with the offbeat bell pattern. (4:42)



(from *Everything Must Go*, 2003)

On the latest Steely Dan album, Keith Carlock became the first drummer to play on every track since 1973, when Jim Hodder was in the band. One listen to Carlock explains why. His drumming is tasteful and uncluttered, and his groove is impeccable. On this track his ghost notes are *so* subtle, adding just a touch of ambience to his performance. The range of dynamics between Keith's ghost notes and snare accents is about as extreme as one can get. (0:18)

You can reach Ed Breckenfeld through his Web site, www.edbreckenfeld.com.

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7 In 4

The Odd In The Even

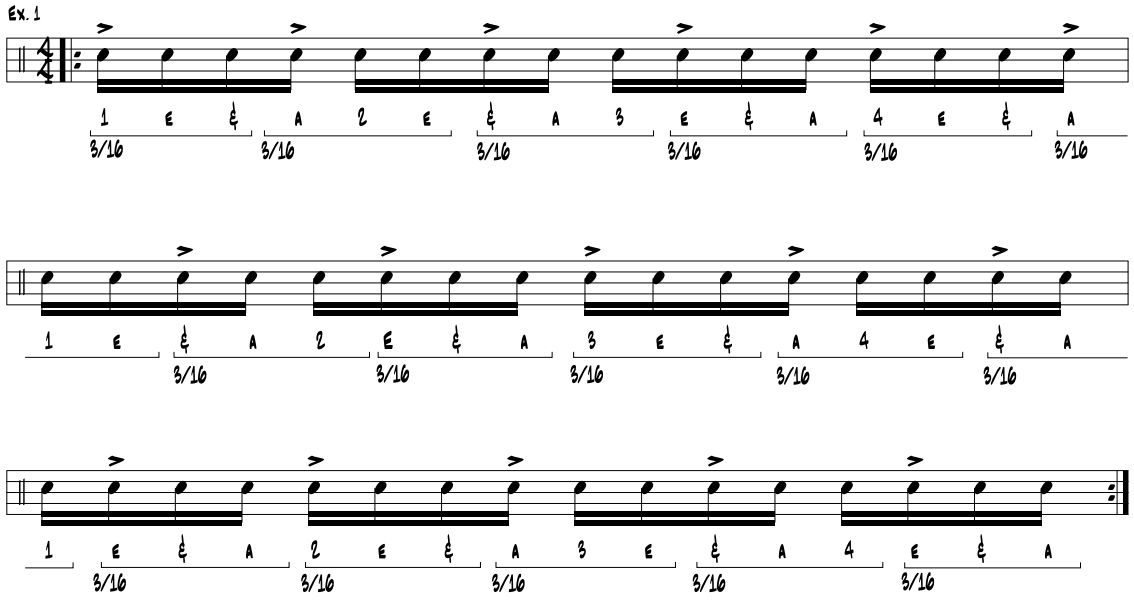
by David Garibaldi

MUSIC KEY

open H.H.
S.D.
B.D.

For many years now, I've been intrigued by the idea of odd time signatures within even time signatures. Conceptually, this "odd-in-the-even" is often heard in a solo context, and when mastered, removes the limitation of barlines. I'm going to be discussing this concept in this article.

A common figure, which we've all heard and used, is 3/16 within 4/4. Think of an accent every three 16th notes. It looks like this:

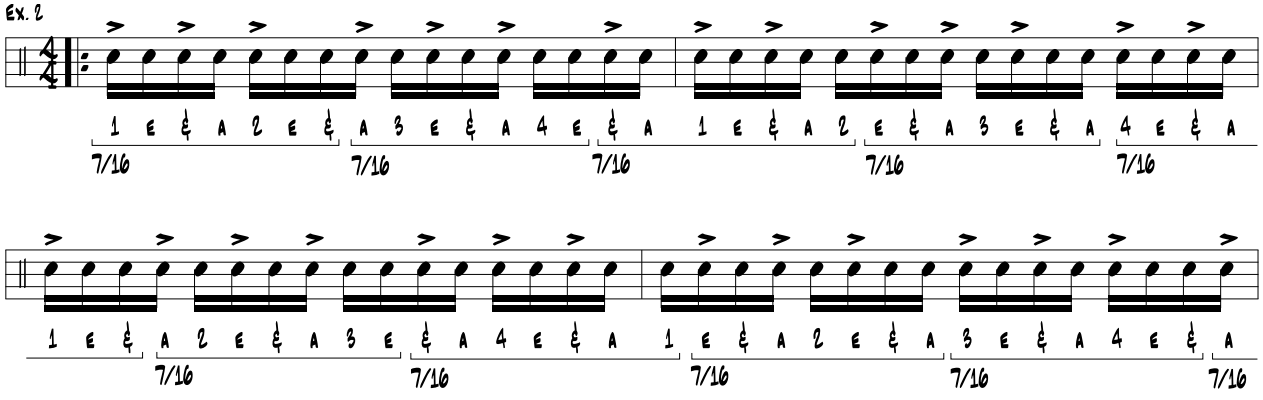


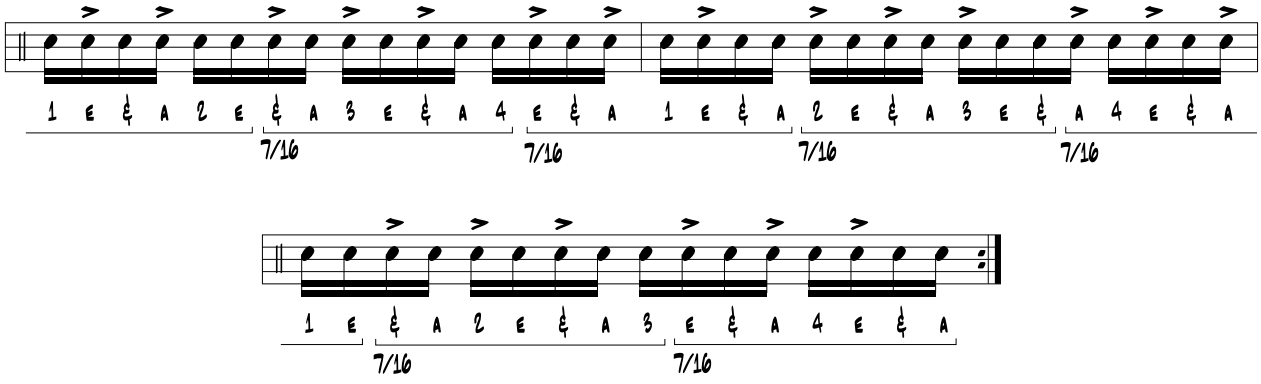
3/16 cycles through 4/4 sixteen times, coming back to beat 1 after three bars of 4/4.

Seven in four is playing in 7/4, but the time signature is 4/4. The rhythm that "unlocked" my ears to hear this was 7/16, subdivided 2-2-3. I wrote this out over 4/4, so I could see what it looked like, and then I learned it measure by measure until I could hear both times simultaneously.

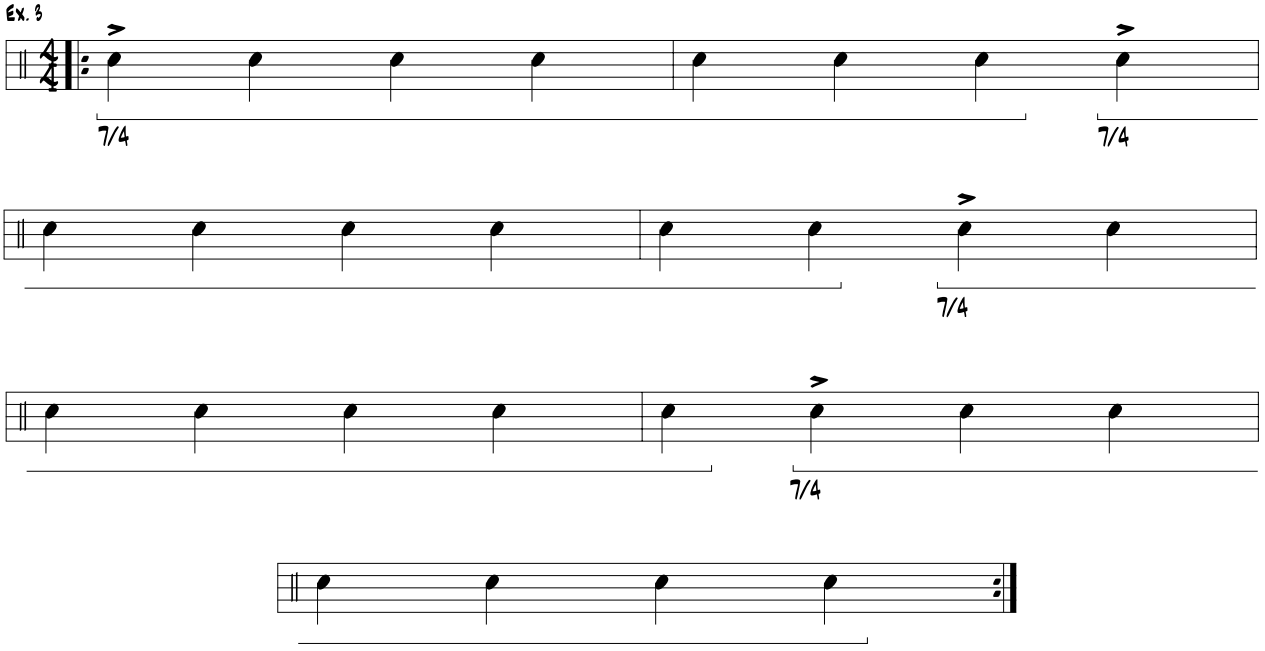
I counted in 4/4, while playing the following exercise. A 7/16 pattern over 4/4 creates a cycle of seven bars of 4/4 time. Remember, 4/4 is basically 16/16—the 16th notes remain constant.

Here's what it looks like:





Once I could play it all the way through, I omitted the unaccented notes and played the accents only. Confused yet? A basic way to look at this can be seen using quarter notes. Think of an accent every seven beats.



Counting aloud is very important when practicing these exercises, and doing so will train your ear to hear unusual rhythms or rhythmic intervals in relation to beat 1 of whatever time signature you're in. I call this "rhythmic interval ear training." Counting aloud works much like the solfeggio system does when learning to hear note intervals.

This process takes patience. But if you put in the time, you absolutely will get it. Realistically, I've spent several years working on this, and I continue to refine it. Like other techniques, it's become part of the way I view rhythm, and I maintain it by practice and application.

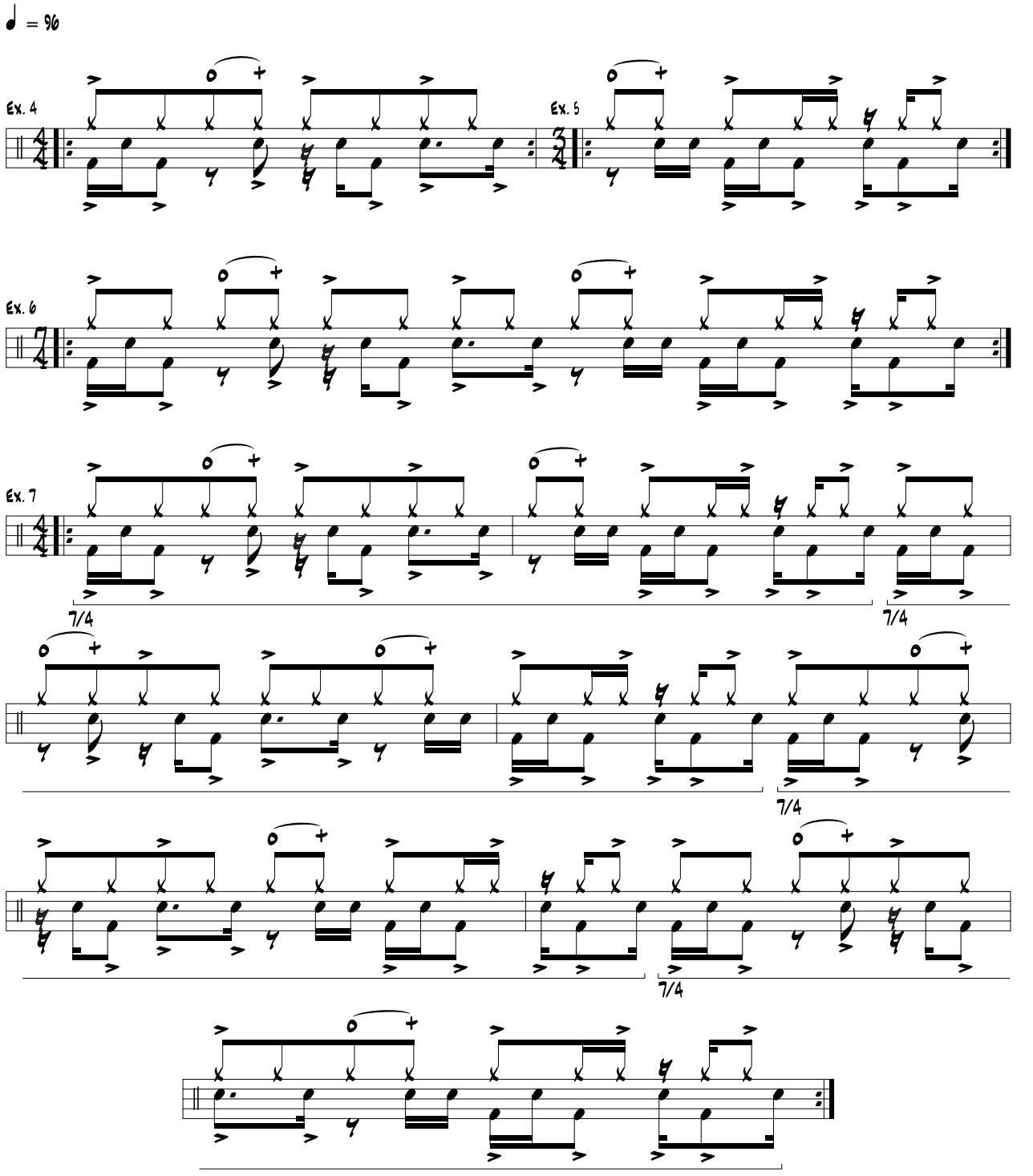
The more I practiced the exercise (Example 2), the easier it became to hear 4/4 while playing seven, as well as five, nine, eleven, thirteen, and beyond. Once I could easily hear it, I started to get all sorts of ideas. My favorite way to apply this, which produces spectacular results, is to create grooves using the seven-bar cycle.

I stumbled upon this a few years ago while studying Gary Chaffee's books, and it changed my drumming dramatically. There might be an easier way to explain this, but what I'm showing you here is how I learned this and how I apply it. This is "garage band" all the way!

Funk drumming is based on 4/4 time and uses a lot of structure in the building of phrases. Traditionally these grooves are one- or two-bar patterns. Occasionally you'll come upon four- or eight-bar patterns.

Seven in four combines the "odd-in-the-even" concept with the groove and rhythmic style of the James Brown drummers.

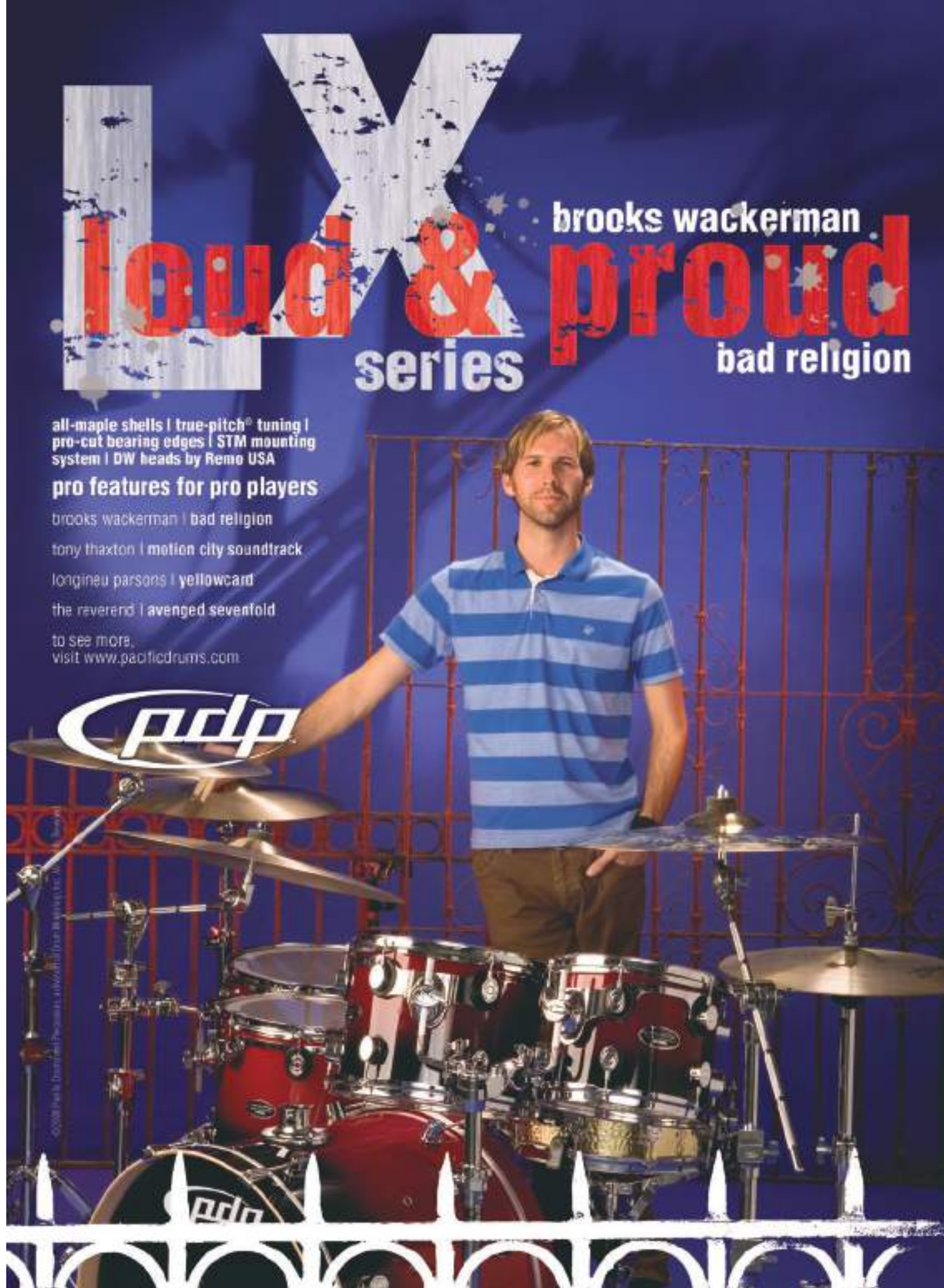
Okay, check this out: On the following page, Example 4 is in 4/4, and Example 5 is in 3/4. In Example 6, they are combined to make one measure of 7/4. Example 7 is the 7/4 groove laid on top of 4/4…and there's the seven-bar cycle. Look at the brackets underneath each seven and you'll see how it moves through the 4/4.



Practice Suggestions

- Play as a seven-bar cycle.
- Make up beats using any single measure, or combine measures to make longer phrases.
- Practice with a click, a drum machine, or a recording you like.

Remember, understanding the basic concepts of Examples 1 and 2 will unlock the "secret," so be patient and you'll get it. Repetition, counting aloud, and patience will reap big rewards. See you next time. Enjoy!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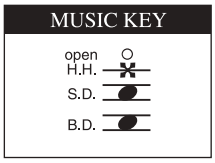
Essential Grooves

Part 1: Rock

by Tommy Igoe



Let me say straight off that I'm really not a very smart guy. Sure, I can play, write, and function as a musician and tax-paying member of society. But smart? Not so much. I'll give you an example.

Say you're planning to write a book and have a deadline of September 15. Not your ordinary, flexible deadline, but more like a "be finished or the publishers will be waiting outside your house with spray paint to change your car into the most lovely shade of pink" deadline. Most intelligent people would probably, oh, I don't know, clear out some time for such an ambitious endeavor. At the very least, the smart ones would avoid the temptation to keep adding features to an already bursting concept, right?

Truthfully, now that my book *Groove Essentials: The Play-Along* is complete, I'm almost feeling smart again. This book is basically an interactive groove encyclopedia that focuses on a core group of forty-seven grooves that are broken into five families—rock, funk, R&B/hip-hop, jazz, and world/specialty.

In the coming months, we're going to be exploring one groove from each family (except for the diverse "world/specialty" family, from which we'll tackle two grooves), bringing us up to six grooves in total. These articles are all about playing the grooves immediately with music (minus the drums, of course). Each article will have three components:

1) The main groove
2) Two groove variations
3) The chart for the song

When we get to the variations, we won't be running these grooves through the "rhythm grinder" by syncopating, shifting, and shredding them to bits. Rather, the variations will be used to demonstrate different groove *enhancing* concepts that you can apply to whatever music you play. The very idea of "enhancement" is that the original concept is still present, which is a good thing to keep in mind as you're working through the variations.

The charts I've included are examples of true "real life" charts. As you'll see, these charts don't tell you what groove or fill to play. Heck, you aren't even told *when* to fill on most occasions. You'll make plenty of mistakes this way, and that's the idea!

As you're practicing, remember my golden rule (it's really corny so it's easy to remember): "Play what you know, and you won't grow." Without being handheld through the song by the chart, the potential to make mistakes and play some terrible

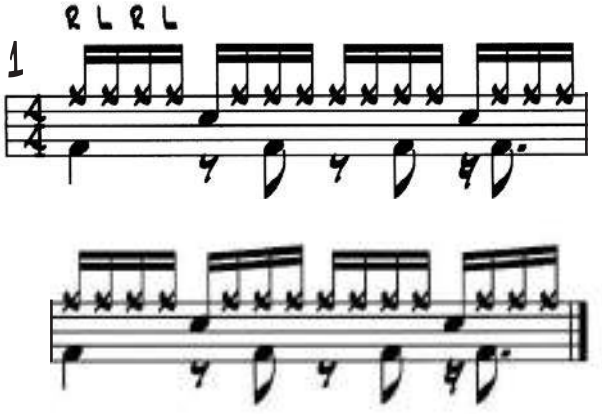
grooves and fills is pretty big. So what? Your practice room is where you're *supposed* to play badly. As a matter of fact, if you aren't making mistakes in your practice room, then you aren't practicing. You're simply playing what you already know.

You'll never play great until you understand what truly terrible drumming feels like. So get in there and make mistakes. With time, you'll find yourself making fewer mistakes until, before you know it, you aren't thinking about mistakes, fills, or anything at all. You'll simply be playing music. Doesn't that sound like more fun than having a chart tell you what to do for every beat? I think so.

To make this a complete musical experience, you can download the song (in mp3 format) at www.moderndrummer.com. This way, you can play along with the track and feel what it's like to sit and groove in the middle of a great band. And let's face it, that's really the only way to make sense of all of this, right? Ultimately, it has to be about the music, not the drumming.

I'm excited to share with you what has become the bedrock of my private instruction philosophy, and we're going to have a great time together in the next six months. I hope the ideas I'm presenting to you will inspire you to continue to explore grooves in this way, which will help improve both your drumming and your overall musicianship. I'd like to hear how it goes for you, so please drop me a line. I'm easy to find. I'll be the guy driving the pink car.

Slow Rock Groove

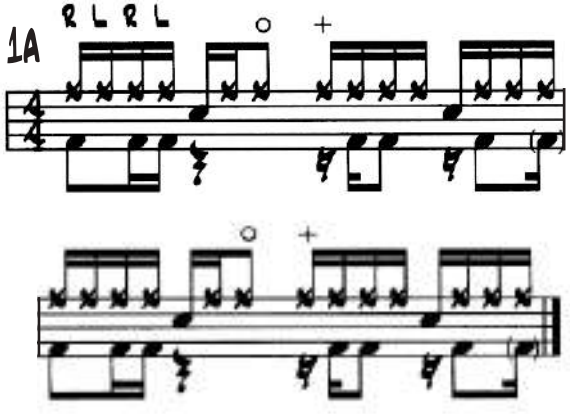
Our first groove is the following 16th-note rock pattern. Sure, we could have chosen the obvious 8th-note rock groove, but let's get a little adventurous. Here's the main groove in its simple glory.

Let's talk about some obvious things first. The hi-hat is played with two hands to create a continuous flow of 16ths. These 16ths are the glue that binds this groove together. All your other limbs must line up with these subdivisions, or you won't groove at all.

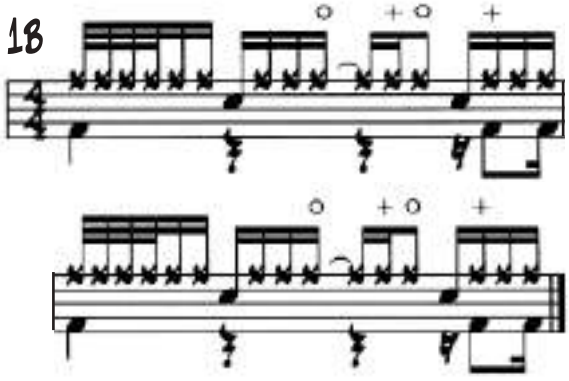
The tempo of this song is slow enough that many of you could probably play the hi-hat with one hand. However, don't! Using one-handed 16ths would put you closer to an R&B feel, which you don't want right now. Playing with two hands on the hi-hat gives you a chunky sound that seeps into all of your limbs, adding weight and heft to the groove. Give it a try, and you'll see what I mean.

You also have less work to do when playing with two hands. Grooves that are physically easy to play will often have a different time center, therefore making the song feel different. (Time center is a crucial concept we'll be discussing in the coming months.) So even if you can play a pattern with one hand, sometimes it's a wise choice not to. The music will always guide you to the right decision.

Also notice that there are no accents in this groove. It would be silly to write accents on a groove like this because it would only represent one version of the groove. But there are countless ways in which it can be played. For example, close your hi-hats tightly with your foot and play lightly with the tip of your stick in the center of the cymbals. Now, loosen them slightly with your foot and play hard with the shoulder of the stick on the edge. These are two extremes, but there are a million possibilities in between those two sounds that can help you create breathing, grooving hi-hat parts. Experiment!

Hopefully you've also noticed that the bass drum part is deceptively syncopated. Although this part is physically easy to play, it must be laid exactly in line with the hi-hat, otherwise your groove is shot. It's a lot harder than it looks (especially with this slow tempo), so you should record yourself to judge your accuracy. It's very difficult to hear what you sound like in real-time. Only during playback will you hear problems hiding within your groove. Now here are two groove variations.

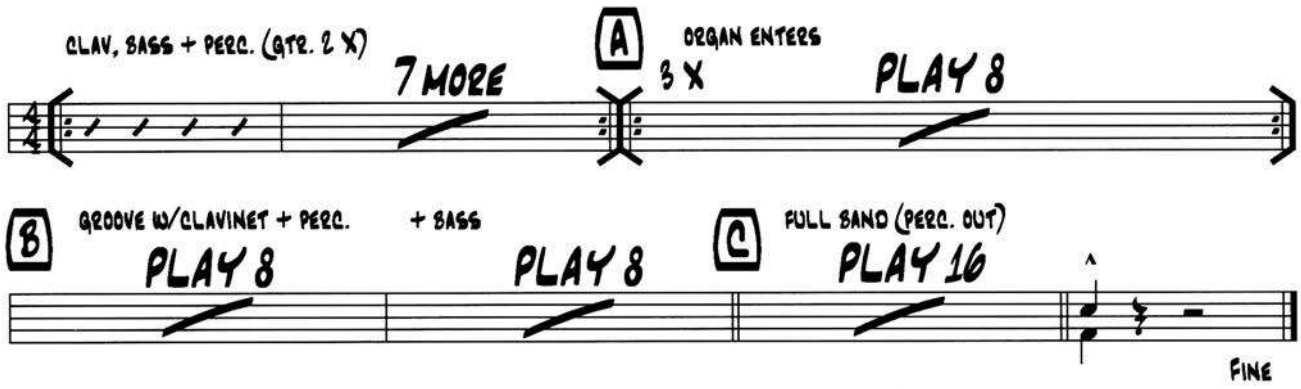




As you can see, both variations are a bit more rhythmically adventurous than the original groove. But they still maintain a strong relationship. Example 1A has a slightly busier bass drum part and contains the powerful open hat sound. The open hi-hat in this pattern takes the place of the original bass drum note that was in this spot (the "&" of beat 2).

Example 1B demonstrates the concept of groove enhancement by using both addition *and* subtraction. The bass drum has been simplified, while the hi-hat has become more sophisticated with a slick five-stroke roll and some intricate open/closed ideas. However, you can still see the relationship to the main groove. This variation is an example of a groove "spice." It's not meant to be played as a main groove, but rather as an alternative to be added once in a while. Think of it as hot red pepper: A little goes a long way.

Now, let's take a look at the chart for this song.



You can see what I mean about the chart not being much help. It doesn't offer any suggestions for what to play or where to play it. Don't worry. Here's what you're going to do.

1) Practice the main groove with a metronome until it feels solid and consistent.

2) Without playing, listen to the song and follow along with the chart. Count out all the measures, so you know where you are. If you get lost, just try it again. (In charts, "Play 8" means "play eight bars of groove," and four slash marks, like what's written in the first measure, is shorthand for "play a groove in this measure.")

3) Get behind your drums and play the song using the main groove. Just play the main groove, follow the chart, and see how it goes. If all goes well, move on.

4) Now it's time to be a *musician* and make intelligent decisions about groove variations, inflections, or fills. Notice the descriptions of the instruments above the various phrases in the chart. For example, the organ enters at letter A, so a little variation might be nice to bring us into that new phrase. There are thousands of possibilities waiting for you to explore.

You now have everything you need to lock yourself in your practice room and torture yourself for hours. Seriously, this is such a fun way to learn new grooves because you can open up and let the music inspire some new ideas. Some ideas will be bad. Some will be great. But they'll all be *your* ideas. If you don't have any new ideas today, don't worry. You may have a great one tomorrow.

Just keep in mind that this is a *groove* piece of music. You shouldn't be filling and soloing all over the track. Playing simply and consistently is an art all its own. So if you want to sit back and groove the entire way through with no fills, go right ahead. In fact, I think that's a great idea.

Next month we'll tackle a funk tune and see what kind of mischief we can get into when we start syncopating the groove using another groove construction technique called "displaced backbeat."

Tommy Igoe is the creator of the "Groove Essentials" series of products published by Hudson Music. He is currently serving as the drummer and assistant conductor of the Broadway musical The Lion King. *He has also performed with Art Garfunkel, Stanley Jordan, Leni Stern, New York Voices, Dave Grusin, Patti Austin, Blood Sweat And Tears, and many others. This article is excerpted from Tommy's book* Groove Essentials: The Play-Along, *which is available through Hal Leonard. Used with permission.*

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A Musical Application Of Quintuplets

Part 2: Making Them Swing

by Ari Hoenig

MUSIC KEY

R.C.
S.D.
B.D.
H.H. w/ foot

Last month, we talked about how to hear quintuplets over two beats ("five over 2") or four ("five over four"). This time, we'll look at how we can use these polyrhythms in a jazz context.

For the following examples, start by playing the ride pattern. Then work in the quintuplets. You should also play the hi-hat on beats 2 and 4 in Examples 1–11, even though it's not written. To help you with the spacing, notice that the third stroke of the quintuplet is played just before the third triplet of beat 2, creating a flam between the snare and ride.

If you're like me, these exercises will be much easier to play at a faster tempo. So try starting at 160 bpm. Then slow your metronome down to 90 bpm to really challenge yourself.

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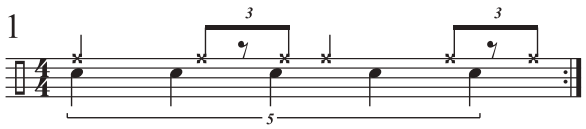
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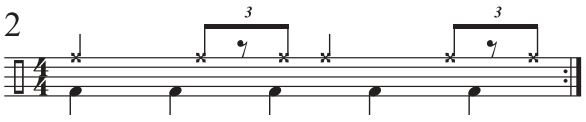
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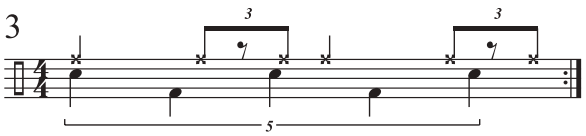
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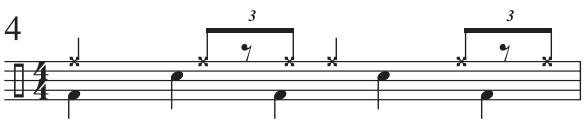
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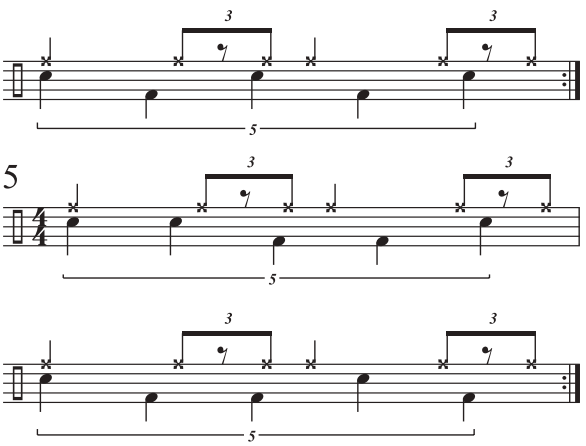
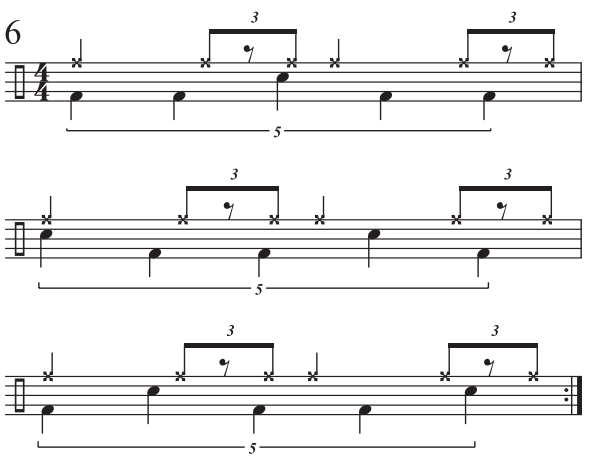
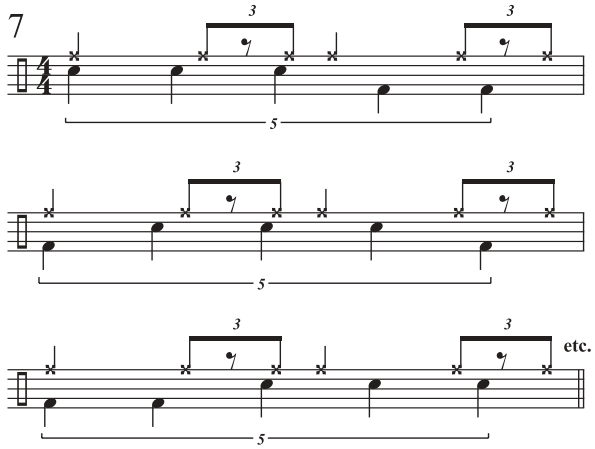


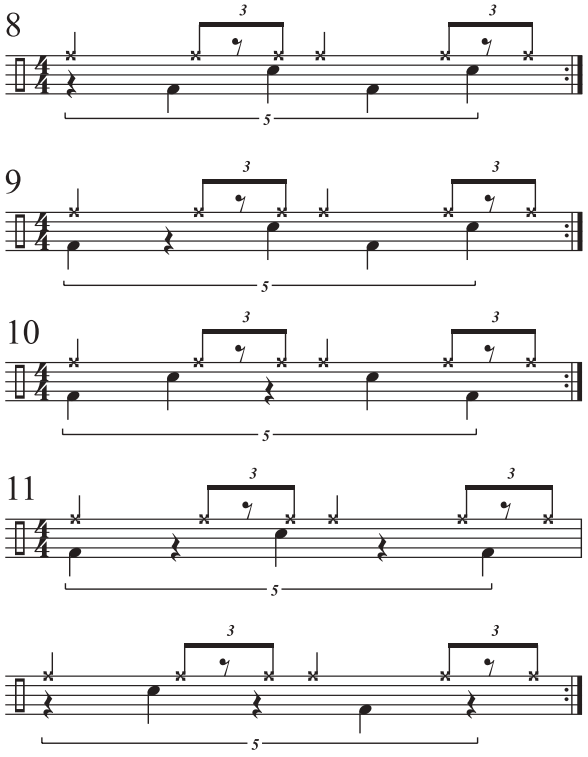
Now try playing the quintuplets in groupings of three.

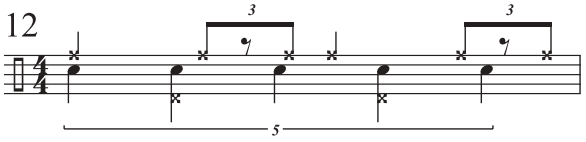
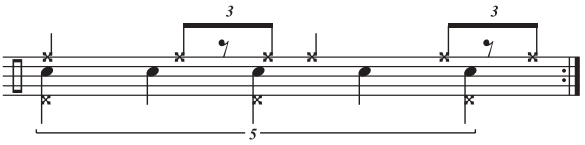
6



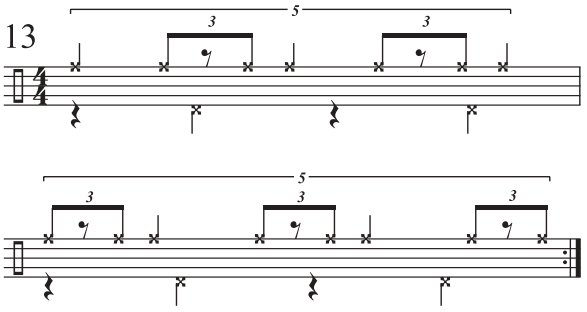


Rests can be very effective as well. Make sure they take up the same amount of space as they would if they were played. This may seem obvious, but it's deceptively difficult. I recommend recording yourself to check that you're spacing the quintuplets correctly.

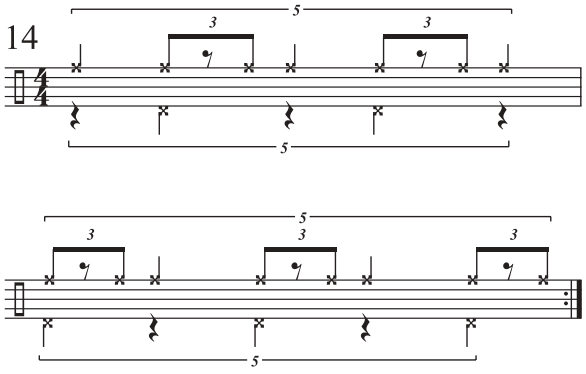


You can also play the hi-hat in quintuplets. First, play it along with the snare, then take the snare out so that the hi-hat is played alone with the ride cymbal.



Now phrase the ride pattern in quintuplets, while keeping the hi-hat on 2 and 4.



After you've mastered that, try playing the hi-hat along with the rhythm of the ride. But beware. This might not be the best musical choice, as you can easily lose your band with this type of pattern. And I don't want to hear about any of you getting fired from a gig because of *me*.



In Part 3, we'll check out some ways to use quintuplets in a groove context.

Ari Hoenig is a top New York jazz drummer. He currently works with Kenny Werner, Wayne Krantz, Jean-Michel Pilc, Chris Potter, and Kurt Rosenwinkel. Ari also leads his own band on Monday nights at New York City jazz club Smalls.

To hear Ari demonstrate the examples in this article, go to
MODERNDRUMMER.com

A Recording Guide For The Home Studio Drummer

Part 2: Taking Control

by Billy Ward

When I was nine years old and just beginning to play the drums, my parents asked the high-school band director which kind of drum to buy for me. Perhaps he had his mind on something else, but for some reason, he said to get a parade drum. So my first drum was a parade drum. There I was, playing along to records and practicing my rudiments on a marching drum mounted on a stand. A few months later, I received a hi-hat stand with cymbals.

Paul La Raia

For a year and a half, that drum and that hi-hat were what I practiced on, learning exercises from Ted Reed's *Syncopation*, the Chapin book, and whatnot. I was tapping my right foot on the floor for the bass drum. I believe this minimal approach helped tremendously to teach me the nuances available on the hi-hat and the snare drum. I became a far better drummer at a younger age because of it.

This experience reinforces my advice from last month's article that lots of input channels and mic's are not important in your studio. You'll learn more with less gear. Quality over quantity! You'll make a better record with a good-sounding room and a few high-quality mic' preamps than with a multi-channel mixer that you can buy at a music store. Some of our favorite drum sounds (Bonham and the Motown drummers, for instance) were captured with only three channels dedicated to the drums. Check out www.mercenary.com to see what a pro audio dealer's inventory looks like.

Gear is important, but not as important as talent, so don't get discouraged.

Now it's time for more "nuts and bolts" information about recording drums.

Miking Concepts

Chris Vrenna has been writing a wonderful series of articles for *MD* called "Home Recording For Drummers." He mentions the "three-finger technique" when it comes to placing close mic's over drums. Though I see this in live stage miking setups, most engineers I work with, like Bob Clearmountain, Nathaniel Kunkel, and Brian Reeves, place the mic's off the edge of the drum hoops, with the snare mic' about one finger off the hoop and shooting across the drum at a very slight downward angle. When a lot of mic's are being used, the close tom mic's will usually be about three fingers away from the drums and angled down across the head a bit more than the snare mic'.

When you're recording, it's important to learn what mic' preamp distortion sounds like. Turn up your preamp's input (sensitivity) knob until you hear that awful, whiny sound. This is mic' preamp distortion. Microphones can also distort because of the sheer volume of drums. The first thing I do when considering a mic' for use on drums is read the specifications to see what SPL (sound pressure level) it can handle. Any mic' that can withstand an SPL over 128 dB should be okay for drums.

One common misconception is that large-diaphragm mic's "hear" lower frequencies better than small-diaphragm mic's do. But truthfully, a large-diaphragm mic' is commonly used because it adds more color to a sound, like for vocals or room sound. A small-diaphragm mic' (sometimes called a pencil mic') actually recovers more quickly from low frequencies. This is called transient response. That smaller diaphragm hears the sound, vibrates, and then (because it is small) *stops* vibrating and says, "Okay, what else have you got?" Large-diaphragm mic's are sometimes still vibrating from that last drum hit when you're playing the next notes.

Can I Get A Witness?

In last month's article, I mentioned that three or four mic's are plenty for recording drums. Given the prices of the better mic' preamps, this approach for a newbie engineer/drummer is wonderful. In a stereo setup, I view my overhead mic's as my "pure witness mic's." As such, I will never EQ them (because the room now sounds good, right?). They would be condenser or ribbon mic's for that extra sizzle that dynamic mic's can't get.

I place my witness mic's an *equal distance* from the center of the snare drum. (Don't be shy about measuring; accuracy is important here.) This ensures that the snare drum will be centered in the stereo mix. Even though we call them overheads, my matched pair of mic's is not always over my head. Sometimes I mount them on each side of my head, firing forward in the cardioid or omni pattern. Other times, I place one a foot and a half from the snare, at shoulder height between my hi-hat and my rack tom, with the other near the floor tom (again an equal distance from the snare). They are both mounted *below* the height of the cymbals. Cymbals usually sound good from all directions, so think "outside the

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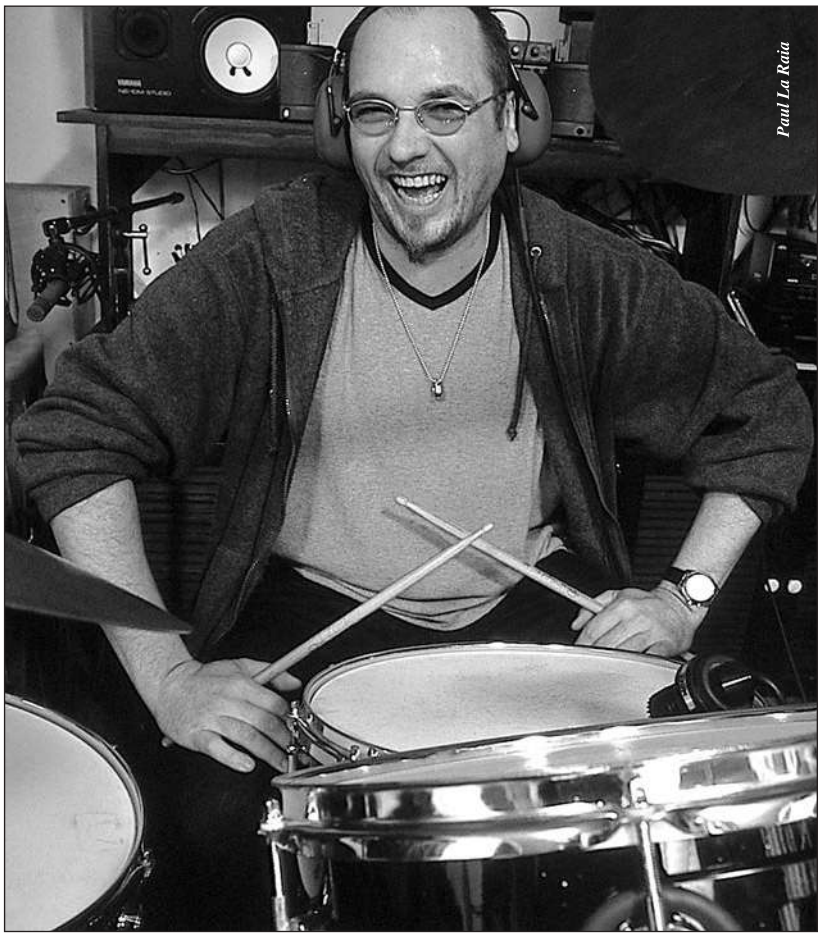
Paul La Raia

Billy has had recording success with minimal mic' setups. In this shot, note the close snare mic', as well as the condenser mic' in the left of the photo, positioned low and pointing toward the floor tom and ride cymbal.

box" with these mic's. In this setup, the bass drum is also usually sitting right in between these two mic's.

Your drums should sound great through any of these mic' placements. If they don't, it's time to tune either the drums or the room!

Today's Specials Are...

After the witness mic's have been placed, the extra mic's that are added become what I call "specialists." Near the bass drum is obviously the next place for a third mic'. Try it inside and outside the drum (and the same distance from the snare as the witness mic's, if possible). One of Chris Vrenna's articles addresses internal positions for the bass drum mic', and how moving the mic' affects the sound.

After the bass drum is miked, place another mic' on the snare for that extra detail. However, when you're mixing, remember that the more realistic sound of your kit will be captured through the witness mic's. If you want a roomier sound and you only have four microphones, then go with a single witness mic' above the kit (over the snare) and move the second witness mic' into the room.

I believe it can be overkill to mike each drum and cymbal. When a drumset is mixed in mono, with only the tom and room mic's creating the stereo image, the drums will be more powerful. This mono overhead setup also creates more space within the audio picture for the other instruments in the band.

One well-known stereo mic'-placement technique uses what's called the three-to-one rule. This technique eliminates any phase problems by precisely placing the microphones in relation to the source. The general rule is that for every unit of distance the mic's are from the source, they should be three units apart. So if your mic's are a foot away, they should be three feet apart. Obviously, this is a "close" miking tech-

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nique; you wouldn't want your mic's six feet away from the source and eighteen feet apart!

Learning to mike a kit with fewer microphones will polish your engineering skills. Your drumming skills will also improve, because you'll learn how to balance the different elements of your kit's volume for the mic's. You might begin playing your hi-hat softer than the drums, and you'll develop the skill of playing one tom louder than another because of the microphone setup.

Microphones are very much like jewelry in their appeal. I'm always looking at a new mic' and wondering if it will magically improve my sound. But try to avoid buying expensive microphones until you've got nice mic' pre's. And let's face it: No matter *what* gear you possess, you can always get better at playing, and at recording. Gear is important, but not as important as talent, so don't get discouraged. I view my time in my own studio as a classroom experience.

Compressors

I never compress my witness mic's in a digital recording environment. Instead, I try to play at a level to match my recorder's input capabilities, so that compression or limiting is not needed. If you don't own a limiter with *great* sonic quality (read: expensive), stay away from messing with your witnesses!

Using EQ is a whole lot like cleaning your bedroom: There should be a place for everything, and everything in its place.

Conversely, I will always use some compression on my snare and bass drum. A compressor will even out the hits on the bass drum (if needed) and, by lowering the volume of the loudest notes, will bring up the volume of the snare's ghost notes.

Many compressors have attack and release knobs. I set my compressor's attack slightly late so that the snare and bass drum's initial "hit" gets through unobstructed. A faster attack might eliminate double hits on the bass drum, which some of you may have trouble with. But it's far better to develop a more skillful "touch" on the bass drum that won't require that kind of sonic surgery.

The better compressors have beautiful release points. Many of them release in waves. The RNL (which stands for "Really Nice Limiter/Compressor," honest!) is an inexpensive compressor ($200) that offers a couple of interesting release settings. But usually you have to spend some money in order to experience what a compressor can do to a sound.

You want to stay away from a phenomenon called "compressor pumping and breathing." This is where the compressor grabs the sound and lowers its volume, but the release setting is so fast that it releases quickly and creates an unnatural boost to the ambience of the track. Set your compressor's release time so it doesn't sound like it's working that hard.

The right attack and release settings will even influence the *feel* of a drum track. Sometimes I crank up my Daking compressors' release settings to their extremes (20 dB of compression), and the room mic's end up throbbing in time with the tempo of the song. Fun!

When it comes to virtually any piece of processing gear, an across-the-board rule of thumb is to turn the knob until you hear a difference…and then back it up just a little bit. Until you're *certain* of what's going on, this will keep things safe. I do this not only with compressors, but also with effects like delays and reverbs. I still have a lot to learn about this stuff.

Mixing

Before you touch a knob on a mixing board, you need to do your homework. It's

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critically important to know what your room sounds like and how that sound translates to other rooms and stereos where your mix will be heard. I have no qualms about comparing my mix to that of a similar record that I admire. Also, it's important to listen to live music (without amplification). How can you know whether you've captured a good violin sound if you've never heard a string section playing live?

Okay, now we come to the knob tweaking. Let's start with using EQ, which is a whole lot like cleaning your bedroom: There should be a place for everything, and everything in its place. As an example, I like to leave more than a little bit of 500 Hz out of my snare drum, because this is where so much else is happening, like guitars and pianos. They can have that area.

My further advice is to never touch the 1 kHz to 3 kHz area. When there's too much of 1 kHz, it all just gets butt ugly. If the drum sounds bad in those frequencies, move the darned mic'.

Adding a little 5 kHz can move an instrument or voice more forward in the mix, but too much makes things sound tinny. This is because the natural presence peak in the human ear is around 4 to 6 kHz. In fact, be careful with too much EQ in general, because in the end, the record will start sounding tinny no matter what you do.

From 320 to 340 Hz seems to be a kind of magic area for moving the bass guitar forward in the mix without taking away from the bass drum. Adding 100 Hz will also bring up the bottom end of the bass nicely. I'm reluctant to suggest any more EQ settings for the drums, because the room, the drums, and your personal touch on the instrument will have so much to do with the sound you get.

Sound Choices

And let's not forget that there are many different types of drum sounds. With some records, the bass drum is more of a Motown-like *boomp*. On heavier rock records, we may want to really conquer the lower frequencies. Study lots of recordings, and figure out why they sound so good to you.

Concentrate on the snare drum sound (for example), and notice its sonic relationship with the other rhythmic instruments in that song. Chances are there'll be a very specific communion occurring between the guitars and the snare. Even the top end of the bass and the rhythms of the vocals are no doubt juggling and sharing timbre and volume relationships with the drums. Whoever mixed that song determined which choices to make.

Mixing is a lot like making a pizza. Even though we love lots of cheese (drums, perhaps), too *much* cheese ruins the dinner.

Summary

As I learned to play for the mic's and how they were placed around my kit, I became a better drummer. But in addition to learning from experience, one can get information from other sources. *Tape Op* magazine (www.tapeop.com), for example, is a helpful resource. It features successful producers and engineers, many of whom are making great records with less-than-pristine gear.

My "quote of the month" comes from Nathaniel Kunkel, who engineered the B.B. King session I played recently. I had complimented him on his focus during our sessions, and on the way he was always one step ahead of us. After hearing my kudos, he said, "That's the single greatest thing that George Massenburg taught me. George said, 'The biggest—and the hardest—thing to do is to simply *be there*, in the moment, every moment, for the entire fourteen-hour day. And do that *every* day.'"

This level of concentration is the thing that great music performers have, whether they're engineers, producers, or musicians. I wish you much success in your recording endeavors. Let's take control of our sound!

Billy Ward has worked with Carly Simon, Robbie Robertson, Ace Frehley, John Patitucci, and Joan Osborne. His book, Inside Out: Exploring The Mental Aspects Of Drumming*, was recently released by Modern Drummer Publications. He also has an award-winning DVD out,* Big Time. *Billy invites you to respond, speak personally about your audio problems, or seek more information at his drummer's discussion forum at www.billyward.com.*

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GIGS

John Scofield
Manhattan Transfer
Ravi Coltrane

steve HASS

time traveler

story by Michael Parillo
photos by Paul La Raia

As you climb the stairs to Steve Hass's apartment in Astoria, New York, it's clear you're heading toward a drummer's dwelling even before you reach the door. A pile of well-worn road cases on the stairwell is a dead giveaway. Inside, there's more evidence. Stacks of cymbals leaning against any vertical surface, an enticing array of snare drums in all sizes and colors, practice pads every ten yards or so—it's like the guy is running a black-market drum shop.

Of course, the thirty-four-year-old drummer never gets to use these goodies, at least not here, because he's spending more time than ever on the road. For several years he's held the drum chair with the venerable vocal group The Manhattan Transfer, touring the world and also making trips with Transfer singer Janis Siegel's ensemble. And in the fall of 2005 he began gigging with John Scofield, behind the guitarist's Ray Charles tribute album, *That's What I Say*, on which Steve Jordan played drums.

At last Scofield, who had recently kept his groove projects and jazz bands separate, can mix styles on stage, because Hass is as comfortable swinging as he is laying down a fat backbeat. "It's all there with Steve," Scofield says. "He has the mindset to do the real R&B, not just 'funky jazz,' and we can do straight-ahead tunes too. That's something I've always wanted but haven't really done until now. I was lucky to find him."

Before he started spending half his year touring, Hass, who also maintains a residence in Los Angeles, was well on his way to becoming a full-time session drummer, an increasingly rare feat these days. Scofield, praising Hass's professionalism and solid time, says, "I'm sure if this was twenty years ago Steve wouldn't even be on the road." Hass has recorded with pop artists as well as jazzers. But no matter what the project is, he's sure to be thoroughly prepared, and he gives his all to serve the music and honor the desires of the artist.

It all began in New York City's Greek bouzouki clubs, where a young Steve Hasapoglou (Hass is his stage name), there with his parents, would internalize grooves in seven practically before he could even *count* to seven. Proper kit drumming began when he was fifteen. And after high school he spent six months at PIT before earning a full scholarship to the Berklee College Of Music.

Back in New York City after his four years at Berklee, Hass gigged and recorded with saxophonist Ravi Coltrane and many others as his career revved up. And in 2003, just before he joined Manhattan Transfer and played on their *Vibrate* album, he issued an LP, *Traveler*, under his own name. *Traveler*, which he co-produced, is quintessential Hass—a swingin', funkin' affair that makes diverse detours into Afro-Cuban, country, and even the Greek music he was raised on.

MD: Let's start by talking about your gigs with John Scofield and Manhattan Transfer. How did they come about?

Steve: Both gigs came through auditions, but not wide-open auditions. In Scofield's case I was recommended by a couple people. He was checking out drummers for months. When he called to say he wanted me for the gig, I was high the whole day. I was honored.

MD: Was he looking specifically for someone who could play both funk and jazz?

Steve: I think so, because at the audition we did both. He was checking out the groove, and we also played jazz tunes like "Softly As In A Morning Sunrise." He put this band together to support the Ray Charles album, which isn't a jazz album. But Sco is a jazz musician, and everyone in the band is a jazz musician at heart. We play jazz tunes that Ray Charles would've liked. [laughs] Because he was a jazz pianist as well.

MD: What is it like to hear Scofield's distinctive guitar sound on stage?

Steve: It's amazing. It's easy for me to stay home in the groove, because I enjoy listening to him so much. I basically lay back, and to me that's how his music sounds best.

With the jazz tunes, I do a lot more comping and offer more ideas. But over funk he likes to play the techno stuff he was using on *Überjam*. He'll create a loop, and I'll keep the tempo as solid as possible to have the loop work every time he steps on it. We don't play to a click.

MD: What was the process to learn Steve Jordan's parts from the Charles album?

Steve: First of all, listening to Steve on that album just kills me. It's such an inspiration, everything from the drum sounds to the grooves to the organic flavor of it.

Steve had some traditional-sounding cymbals on some tracks, and big bombastic rock crashes on others. So I had to come up with a nice set of all-around cymbals that I could swing on but also really dig into.

And I play three snare drums on this gig, because the different snares Steve used are like signatures of the groove. On "I Can't Stop Loving You" he used an extremely deep, super-fat snare. A regular drum wasn't going to capture the vibe. So I use a 7"-deep brass drum,

tuned as low as possible, with a little bit of tape on it. I have an Erskine piccolo for that "Jordan snap" on the James Brown–ish grooves, and a regular snare for the jazz tunes and ballads.

I have them on stands and I switch them in and out. At the first rehearsal it seemed like Sco was impressed with that. I had listened to the album and I came prepared. He just called tunes and didn't have to tell me what to play. Then, as time went on, I started straying from the original parts.

On the jazz stuff, I play whatever I want. I like comping and getting involved with the soloist, so I talked to Sco about it to see what he wanted. He was very open: "Just play your stuff, and we'll get a vibe together." When you improvise with new musicians, you have to feel each other out. You don't know where you're stepping quite yet.

At the first few gigs when we went into jazz sections, I would play something and he would play something, and the two might clash. It wasn't a big deal, but our time feels took a minute to hook up. The connection was pretty instant, though, and eventually it was amazing.

MD: How did the Manhattan Transfer gig come about?

Steve: I was playing with Miri Ben-Ari, who's now this famous hip-hop violinist. Yaron Gershovsky, the Transfer's musical director, was subbing on the gig, and we had somewhat of a connection. When I heard the Transfer drum chair had opened up, I sent in a résumé. I got the okay from Yaron, and we set up the audition.

It was a nerve-racking experience, but I was prepared. They gave me eight tunes to learn, and I learned everything about them. [laughs] From that singer-songwriter mode where sometimes you don't even have time to do a rehearsal, you learn the stuff and you play it like the record. They had a book with their music, but I didn't need to read.

I overheard other auditions where guys sounded great but didn't know the material. There's an incredible tune called "Stompin' At Mahogany Hall," which Abe Laboriel Jr. played on. It's a second-line groove, but every verse has something else going on—tambourine here, shaker there, a whistle blowing. I brought percussion and a samba whistle for it. And I heard two auditions prior to mine where they just played a second-line groove on the snare. It felt great, but that wasn't the *part*. A lot of guys say, "So-and-so played that part, so I'm going to play something else." For me that's not the way it works. After a few months on the road, of course, I changed some things—but that was after a few months. [laughs]

MD: That gig really calls for you to do it all.

Steve: Believe it or not, the hardest grooves at the beginning were songs like "Boy From New York City" and "Operator." Playing kick-snare, kick-snare for me was always corny, so I never worked on those "Walking On Sunshine"–type grooves. And man did I learn my lesson, because once I finally copped the feel, it felt so good. It's a lot harder than people think. It swings a certain way. I was able to cop all these Vinnie licks, but I couldn't play boom-chack, boom-chack.

MD: When you perform with Manhattan

"I talked to Sco to see what he wanted. He was very open: 'Just play your stuff and we'll get a vibe together.'"

Transfer, how big is the band?

Steve: It goes from trio to quintet. And we do big band tours sometimes, where we'll use the popular big band in town.

MD: That must be a challenge.

Steve: It's a lot of fun. We did a Christmas gig in LA that was a who's-who of session horn and string players. It was brainless. I was able to play fills that I could never get away with if I was playing with another big band. I remember the musical director, in the middle of some of my fills, looking at me and laughing, because he knew that when I came out to hit the figure, the band would be there. But in other situations, I just have to go, *Bap!* [laughs]

It's a whole different ballgame with big bands. I have a sensitive ear for time, and big bands tend to be behind. I have to stay on top of the beat and not let the band's time influence my time. I've recorded a couple of gigs from the soundboard, and it sounds tight. But when you're in the middle of it, when you drop the stick to accent the figure, the band isn't *right* there, it's a little behind. It sounds weird.

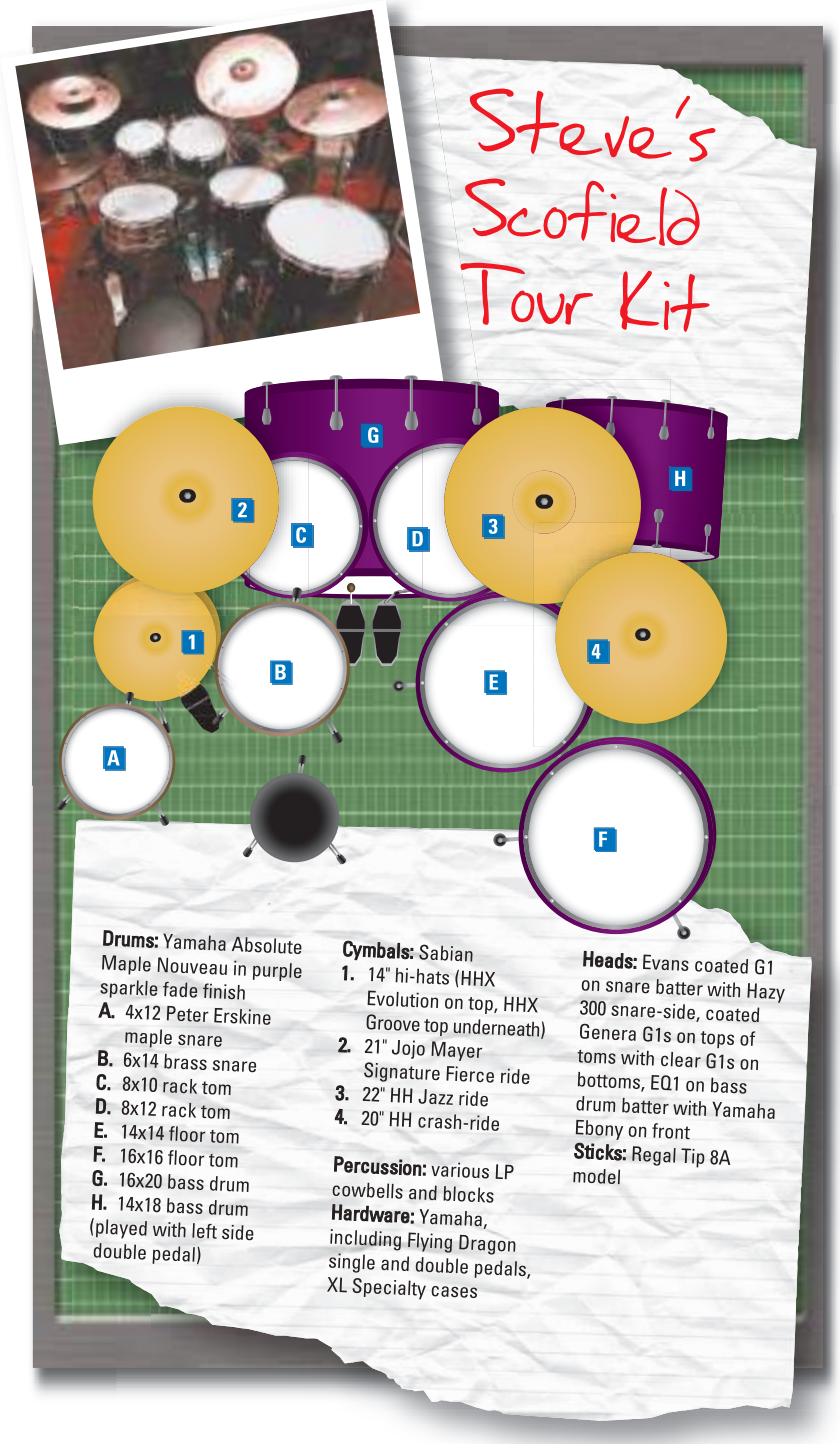
MD: Is that because there are so many people in the band that it's an entity that's hard to move?

Steve: Absolutely. I feel like I have to pull them. Even with the great big bands, you have to pull them a little bit, but their accuracy is better than some of the other bands we play with. But all in all, my big band playing has grown a lot.

MD: You started out playing rock. How did you get into jazz?

Steve: As a kid, I was into Zeppelin, Rush, Van Halen. I got progressively into rock drummers that had jazz influences, like Simon Phillips. And that led me to Tony Williams, who I didn't understand at first. I got into the fusion guys after that—Colaiuta, Weckl, Tom Brechtlein, Steve Gadd. Gadd was great because he hit me right away. It was more earthy. From there I wanted to check out *their* influences, which led me to traditional jazz—Philly Joe Jones, Sid Catlett. I went as far back as I could.

It's funny that when you do that, you see similarities between the grooves they were playing and a Mary J. Blige groove, for example. There's an old groove called the shimmy, from before there was a ride cymbal. It's just riding on the snare, a buzz-roll groove that has



Drums: Yamaha Absolute Maple Nouveau in purple sparkle fade finish
A. 4x12 Peter Erskine maple snare
B. 6x14 brass snare
C. 8x10 rack tom
D. 8x12 rack tom
E. 14x14 floor tom
F. 16x16 floor tom
G. 16x20 bass drum
H. 14x18 bass drum (played with left side double pedal)

Cymbals: Sabian
1. 14" hi-hats (HHX Evolution on top, HHX Groove top underneath)
2. 21" Jojo Mayer Signature Fierce ride
3. 22" HH Jazz ride
4. 20" HH crash-ride

Percussion: various LP cowbells and blocks
Hardware: Yamaha, including Flying Dragon single and double pedals, XL Specialty cases

Heads: Evans coated G1 on snare batter with Hazy 300 snare-side, coated Genera G1s on tops of toms with clear G1s on bottoms, EQ1 on bass drum batter with Yamaha Ebony on front
Sticks: Regal Tip 8A model

a little hip-hop feel to it. It's amazing.

And when I was at PIT, I would go see Tain at the Bell Age Hotel on Wednesday nights, and it would blow my mind. I think that's the moment I really got into straight-ahead jazz. Prior to that I wanted to be a session drummer. I loved Jeff Porcaro, Gadd, Carlos Vega, all those cats. But when I was seeing Tain, and Steve Houghton, I really got into the feel of the swing.

MD: Was it hard for you to get the feel right?

Steve: I guess it took me a minute, but I think I had a natural inclination. Steve Houghton was giving a clinic where he had guys sit in, and I had to play "Impressions" pretty fast. He actually complimented me. He was like, "That felt really good," and I was like, "Really?" [laughs]

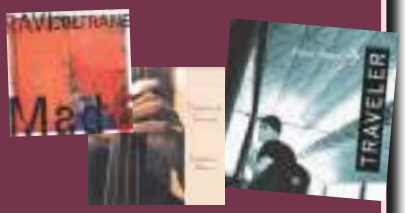
MD: You're also well versed in Latin drumming. Did you learn that in school?

Steve: Yeah. Berklee was great like that. Giovanni Hidalgo was teaching there at the time, and Ignacio Berroa did workshops. That's something I was always interested in. Like with any style I'm into, I immediately asked people I thought were great at it what I should listen to. Then I was checking out Tito Puente, Cubanismo—anything I could get my hands on. I also tried to go back and

Hass Hits

Recordings

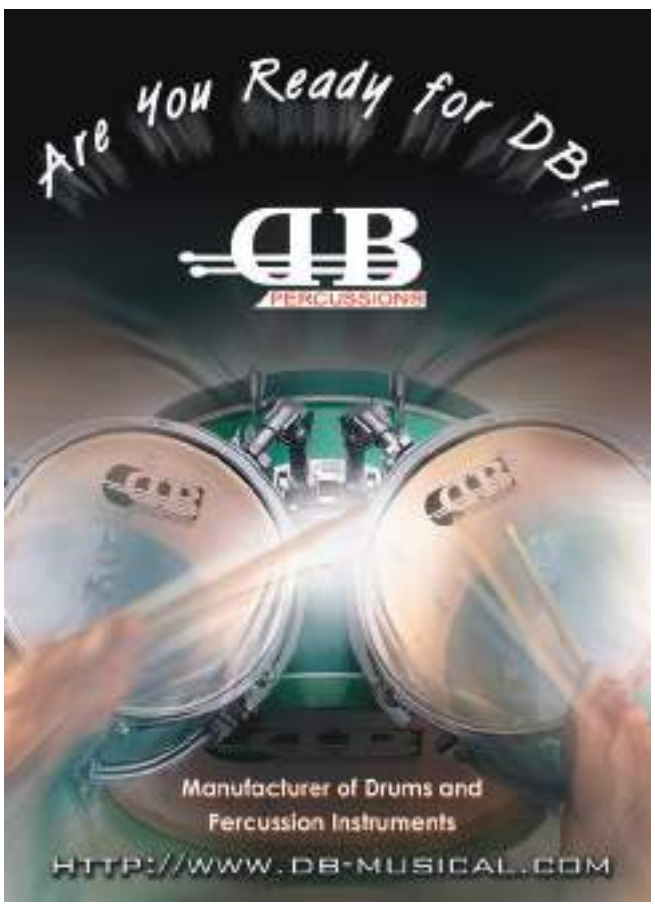
Artist	Album
Steve Hass	Traveler
Ravi Coltrane	Mad 6
Manhattan Transfer	Vibrate
David Morgan	Ordinary Glory
Matthew Parrish	Circles
Dana Mase	Thread Of Blue
Christos Rafalides' Manhattan Vibes	Manhattan Vibes
Miri Ben-Ari	Songs Of The Promised Land
Darryl Hall	Subtle Touch

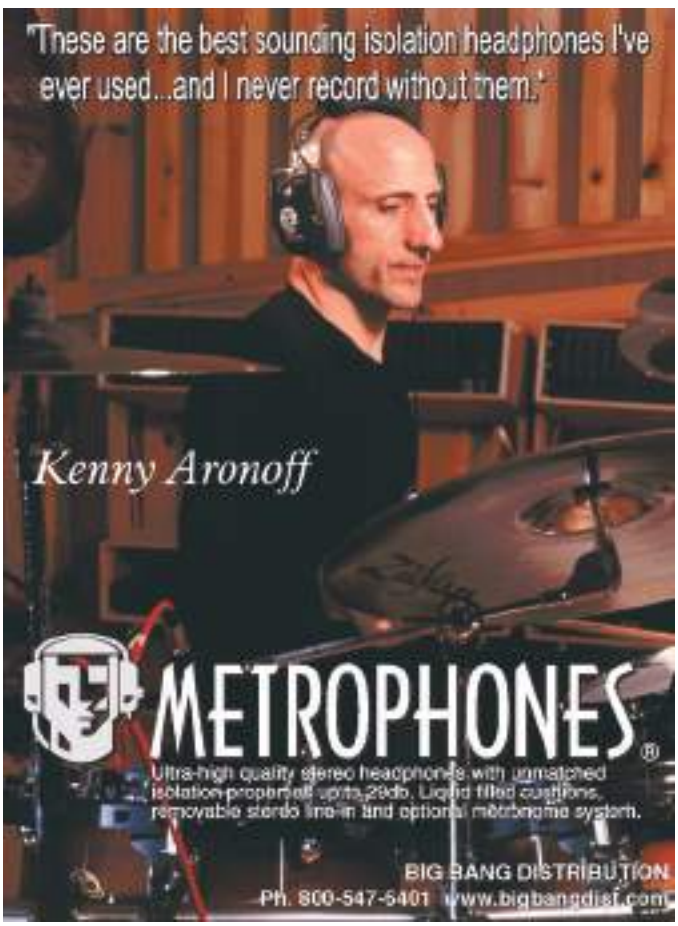


Faves

Artist	Album	Drummer
Miles Davis	The Complete Live At The Plugged Nickel	Tony Williams
John Coltrane	The Complete Africa/Brass Sessions	Elvin Jones
Prince	Parade	Prince, Sheila E
Frank Sinatra	Sinatra At The Sands	Sonny Payne
Michael Jackson	Off The Wall	J.R. Robinson
Wynton Marsalis	Standard Time, Vol. 1	Jeff "Tain" Watts
Shawn Colvin	A Few Small Repairs	Shawn Pelton
Jonatha Brooke	Plumb	Abe Laboriel Jr.

And anything from Led Zeppelin, The Beatles, Steve Gadd, Vinnie Colaiuta, Eddie Palmieri, and Tito Puente.

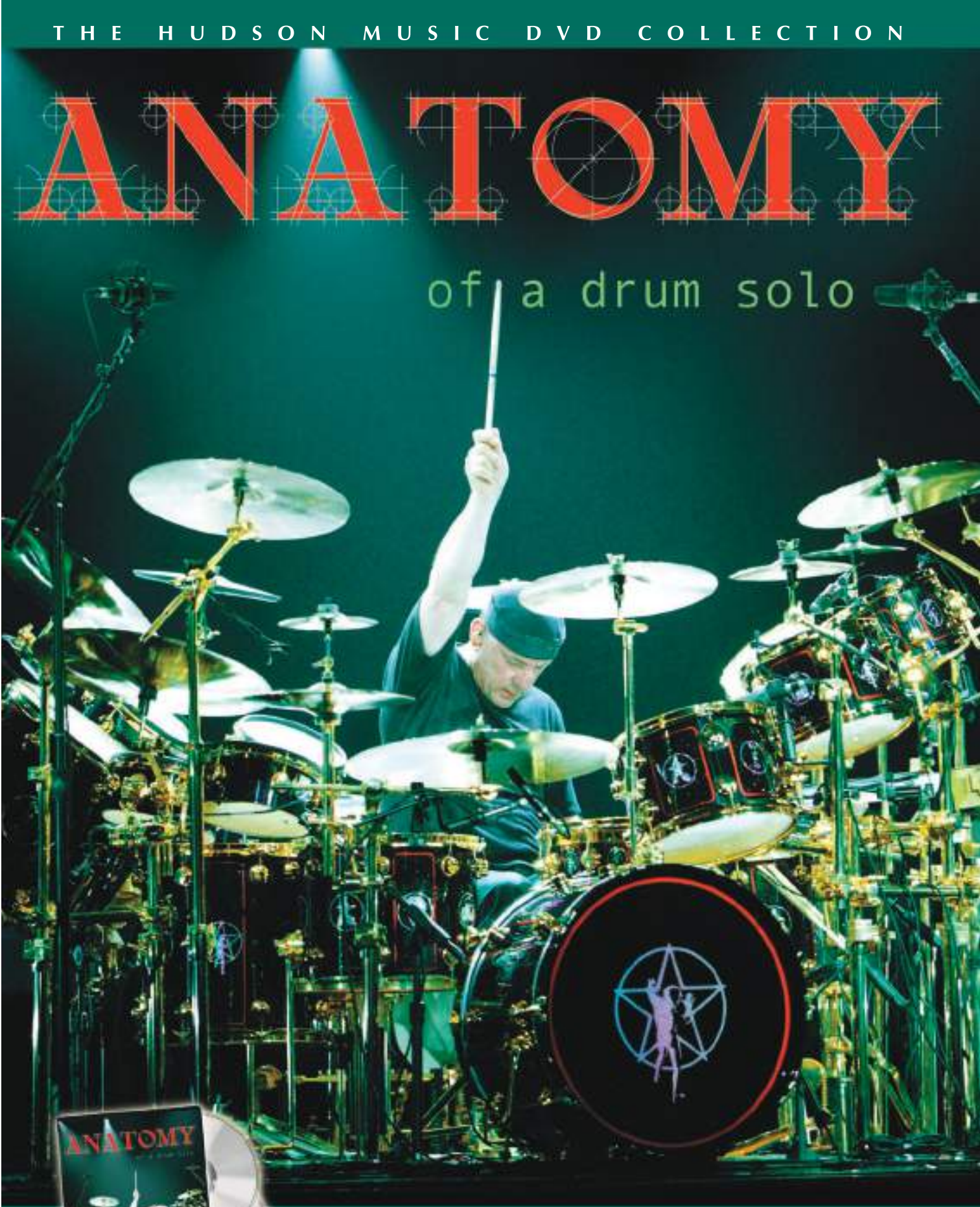




THE HUDSON MUSIC DVD COLLECTION

ANATOMY

of a drum solo



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HUDSON MUSIC

check out traditional Cuban music.

Latin is hard because there are dialects of it. With music being like language and different styles being different languages, you then have the dialects of each style. There's so much that only those guys who specialize in it can really know it all.

MD: The end of your record, *Traveler*, really gets into Afro-Cuban textures.

Steve: I wanted to do "Song Is You," because that's one of my favorite jazz tracks. I love the Art Blakey version. But I wanted to have some Latin on there too. So I decided to play Afro-Cuban in the A sections and swing in the bridge. And [bassist] John Benitez, coming from Danilo Perez's gig, where they adapted claves into odd-meter time, suggested we play in five. It took a minute to get it together, but I like the outcome. It's kind of reckless-sounding. Some of the fills were a little bombastic because I was so excited to be playing. [laughs]

MD: Excited to be playing the tune, or because you'd been caught up in producing?

Steve: A little bit of both. I was happy to be improvising, because a lot of the album was different. There's some country-ish singer-songwriter-type stuff—nice groove, but more production tunes. I really dug the producing aspect of it, though. I would love to produce an album with someone else playing drums.

MD: Did you consciously set out to make such a diverse record?

Steve: I initially wanted to have a jazz album. But I felt I wasn't being true to myself, because that's only part of what I like. At the time I was doing a lot of sessions and playing gigs with singer-songwriters *and* jazz musicians. I wanted to represent that particular time in my life, which changed rapidly *right* after that recording. I got all these gigs and had to go out on the road.

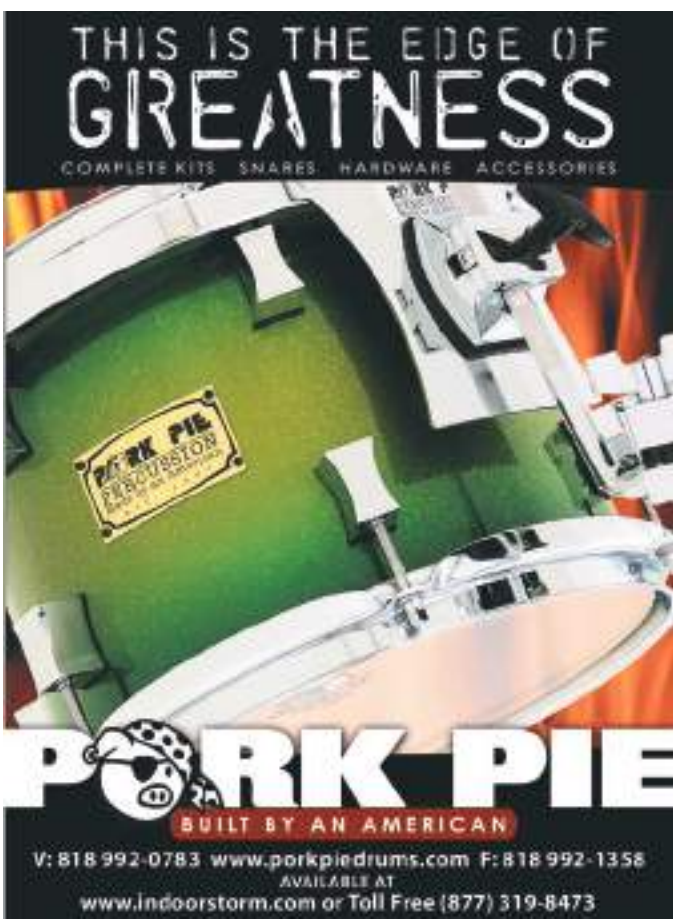
MD: You do your share of programming. Is that an important skill for a working drummer?

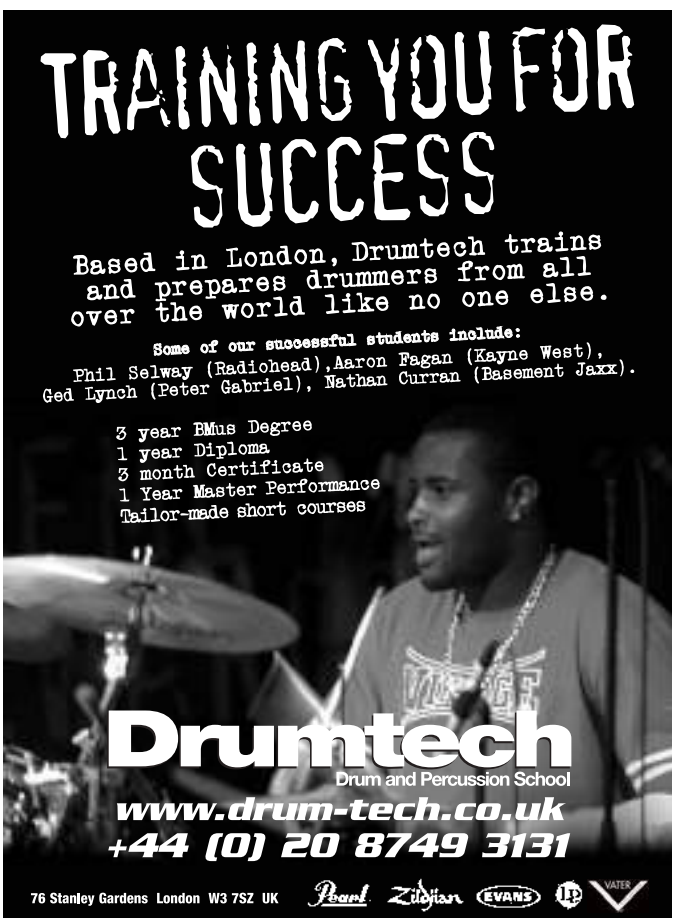
Steve: Absolutely. And nowadays it's easy. I've even compiled a bunch of my own loops from sessions. I come back maybe a month later and ask the artist if I can chop up a couple of bars, and I use those on other sessions. It's been said before, but it's better to embrace technology than to shun it, because you'll work more.

MD: I see practice pads around your apartment. What kind of stuff do you work on?

Steve: I like playing odd phrases and over-the-barline rhythms, so whatever exercise I'm doing is either in an odd time or grouped oddly to work my head at the same time. And for speed while warming up, I just play consecutive flams, because it's singles with both hands.

I'm also trying to develop somewhat of a Moeller-slash-Morello-slash-reverse-finger thing, basically controlling the rebound. A lot of my technique comes from my wrist and fingers and doesn't really incorporate manipulating bounce too much. Now that I'm wanting to break out and play faster—not to play rolls but to independently play fast 16th notes in each hand over swing time, or maybe play a samba but not have to break it up—I'm working on that on the pad. On the road, in airports—forget it, I annoy everyone.





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Russ Moy

The Teacher As Student

by Michael Parillo

In an unassuming building on a quiet street in Union, New Jersey, drummers from five to seventy-five are being shaped into stage-ready players. They're students at the Russ Moy Drum Studio, which is run by a man whose life has been a tribute to drums, music, and friendship. Russ Moy has been drumming almost as long as he's been breathing—he's a spry sixty-two—and he's proudly celebrating forty-two years of teaching.

Russ is also a veteran whose roots are in jazz, but who has experience playing all the many styles that he explains to his students. Over the years, he's performed with Connie Francis, Jack Jones, Vic Damone, Pearl Bailey, Chubby Checker, and many more. Recently he's been playing with pianist Tomoko Ohno, trombonist Mike Capobianco, and singer and *Sopranos* star Dominic Chianese. This is a man who practices what he preaches.

"It's extremely important that someone who teaches also be able to perform."

An Early Start

"I felt rhythm from the time that I was very young," Russ says. "I cut my teeth with the marching band at my elementary school. It was like a crash course in rudiments." That "crash course" served Russ well, and to this day he starts his students off by handing them the Vic Firth rudiment chart and encouraging them to work with it every day.

When Russ was twelve, his father took the young drummer—who was a huge Gene Krupa fan—to see his idol in the flesh at the Metropole in Manhattan. They met Krupa between sets, and asked him if he might give Russ lessons. Krupa said he'd be hitting the road and had no time to teach. Then he added, "But the cat to study with in New York is Sam Ulano. Go look him up."

Russ did contact Ulano, and began studying in earnest. "I credit Sam with turning me around as a drummer," Russ says. "Until then, I pretty much just worried about chops. I knew that reading was important, but I didn't realize *how* important."

At one point Ulano told Russ, "You've been playing a jazz beat, but you don't know what independence is." With that, Ulano introduced Russ to Jim Chapin's *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer*, one of the most important books in the history of drumming. Ulano encouraged Russ to study with Chapin, and another lifelong friendship was formed. "I was impressed by Jim's tremendous spirit," says Russ, "which he still has."

Russ also studied with Freddie Waits, Charlie Persip, and *Syncopation* author Ted Reed. "All of them talked about reading, jazz, and odd times," he says. These concepts remain crucial to Russ's own teaching program.

On The Teaching Track

It was Sam Ulano who made Russ want to become a teacher. "Sam's passion and love for what he did inspired me," says Russ. So, at the ripe old age of nineteen, Russ opened his first studio. He continued to study with Ulano for five more years, and the two have remained close ever since.

As it turned out, Ulano's Manhattan studio produced a veritable who's-who of NYC-area drum

From left: Russ Moy with mentor and friend Sam Ulano, with legendary teacher and author Jim Chapin, and a young Russ with one of his heroes, Buddy Rich

instructors. "John Sarracco, Bill Rotella, Glenn Weber, and I would all take lessons an hour apart," says Russ. "We became best friends, and we all opened our studios at the same time. It's been like a brotherhood all these years."

Covering All The Bases

Russ financed his early lessons with money he earned playing gigs, and he's been gigging steadily ever since. "It's *extremely* important that someone who teaches also be able to perform," he says. "I've performed with many people on the jazz scene, but club dates were vital in terms of rounding me out as a musician. That's where I'd play rock, ethnic music, and all the different stuff. One of the things I impart to my students is that you should be as multi-dimensional as possible. And you should listen to *everything*. I'll often mention Buddy Rich to a young student, and the reply will be: 'Who?'"

They soon learn. Russ familiarizes his students with drumming history, and no history is complete without Rich. Russ himself was introduced to Buddy early in his studies with Sam Ulano. "Everybody knew there were two sides to Buddy," says Russ. "I knew the side that was warm and wonderful."

What about students who only want to learn rock? "I go back to the evolution of rock and R&B," Russ says, "and I take them through the different genres of jazz—Dixieland and the swing era—because rock came from jazz." Russ says he encounters relatively little resistance to his call for diversity. "Sometimes in the beginning they wonder where I'm coming from. But soon they understand what it's all about."

Teaching Program

Russ interviews new students before starting their lessons, in order to create a program that's effective for each individual. "I evaluate their reading immediately," he says. "I also find out if they're right- or left-handed. A lefty will play better *as* a lefty, so I have lefty and righty drumsets in my studio. I also use the interview to learn whether a student has a learning disability, like ADD. People don't all learn in the same way."

In general, each lesson with Russ focuses on three main concepts: reading, hand development, and drumset playing. "We work on the pad, which I advocate using each and every day," he says. "We read and review what the student did during the week, and then we get on the drumset." Every student also becomes acquainted with Latin drumming, and learns to use brushes and mallets. In addition, Russ has found that hand drumming, though useful to all, is especially beneficial for young students.

Russ favors traditional grip for his own playing, but he's an equal-opportunity instructor. "We start with matched grip," he says, "and then I introduce traditional as time goes on. Together we determine what they're comfortable with. If they want to stick with one or the other, I respect that."

Russ also respects his students' musical tastes. He may not rip double-bass licks at his gigs, but he teaches them at his studio. And he stays up on all the hot players. Generally, he finds that the best rock, pop, and hip-hop drummers from any given year reinforce his notion that a well-rounded background is a key to success: "Students begin to realize that many

Top-10 Tips For The First-Time Teacher

1. Establish rates for half-hour and full-hour lessons, and decide which students can handle an hour.

2. Have a cancellation policy. Russ requires 24-hour notice for reasons other than illness, and makes up missed lessons where possible.

3. Be sure your studio lease clearly states that you're a drummer and will be making noise. Otherwise, the lease could be terminated if neighbors complain about the racket.

4. Advertise in the yellow pages and in *Modern Drummer*, and hang fliers at music stores. "The guys at music stores have gotten to know the type of teaching job I've done," says Russ, "and they've been my biggest advocates."

5. Create a Web site that includes pertinent information about your teaching and performing career.

6. Get fire, theft, and liability insurance to cover you in case of natural disaster, burglary, or an injury at or near your studio. Also be sure to install a burglar alarm.

7. Keep good financial records, and pay your taxes. You can be audited!

8. Realize that constant road work could interfere with your teaching practice. Give ample notice when you know you'll be away, and try not to be gone for an inordinate amount of time.

9. Understand that sports and homework may interfere with a student's practice time. "It's never *just* playing the drums," Russ says. "Students have to balance their lifestyle, just as we do."

10. Be willing to accept the fact that this is not an overnight process. "You're only going to be as effective as your own knowledge base and your ability to motivate the student," says Russ. "So it's very important that you continually work at this."

Russ's Favorite Teaching Texts

Russ uses literally hundreds of books in his lessons. Here are a few of his tried-and-true favorites.

- ***ABC Guide To Drumming*** by Sam Ulano
- ***Accent On Achievement*** by John O'Reilly and Mark Williams
- ***Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer*** by Jim Chapin
- ***Double Bass Drumming*** by Joe Franco
- ***Drum Techniques Of Led Zeppelin*** transcribed by Bill Wheeler
- ***Drum Techniques Of Rush*** transcribed by Bill Wheeler
- ***The Drummer's Bible*** by Mick Berry and Jason Gianni
- ***Drummer's Guide To Hip Hop, House, New Jack Swing, Hip House, And Soca House*** by Bill Elder
- ***Essential Styles, Books 1 And 2*** by Steve Houghton
- ***Studio & Big Band Drumming*** by Steve Houghton
- ***The Drumset Soloist*** by Steve Houghton
- ***I've Got You Under My Skins*** by Irv Cottler
- ***N.A.R.D. Drum Solos*** published by Ludwig
- ***A Drummer's Guide To Odd Meters*** by Ed Roscetti
- ***Syncopation*** by Ted Reed

of these drummers, like Travis Barker, have roots in jazz," he says. "I contend that one of the reasons these drummers play so well is because they know their stuff and are able to do everything."

Russ is always realistic with his students about how difficult it is to succeed in music. Still, he's proud of the fact that some of those students have enjoyed or are now enjoying fruitful careers—like former Blue Öyster Cult drummer Rick Downey, and Broadway and jazz drummer Pat O'Donnell. But regardless of a student's ultimate goal, Russ keeps the lessons interesting. "I'm always challenging the students, adding new information, and making it fun," he says. "And I try to encourage them to do something practical, whether that's playing in the school band, playing with their own band, or recording."

Extracurricular Activities

Russ's tireless dedication to his students has found him running clinics at his studio since the 1970s, with guest artists including Louie Bellson, Ed Shaughnessy, Butch Miles, and a "groove summit" with Zoro and Bernard Purdie. Russ also goes into schools with three arts-appreciation programs for kids: Drums, Drums, Drums (with his former student Joe Caroselli), Viva La Musica Latina (with pianist Rio Clemente), and Generations Of Jazz (sponsored by the Jersey Jazz Society).

Russ is also a passionate antidrug advocate. "I'm in a position where I can actually enhance students' lives and help them avoid situations that can take them down," he says. "It's not just about teaching drumming. It's also about values. Many of my students are like my extended family, and we have lifetime relationships."

Russ Moy has accomplished much in his distinguished career, including the honor of presenting Sabian Lifetime Achievement Awards to his mentors, Sam Ulano and Jim Chapin, in 1999. "I'm looking forward with excitement to the next forty years," he says, smiling. "The best way to be a good teacher is to stay a student yourself. That way you're always learning."

For more information and to contact Russ, visit www.russmoydrumstudio.com.

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Stéphane Chamberland

Dom's Canadian Connection

By the age of four, Stéphane Chamberland was already a self-proclaimed "drum freak." However, it wasn't until years later, after attending a clinic by world-renowned drumming ambassador Dom

Famularo, that Stéphane knew his future would be in music and music education. He began his career by seeking guidance from several of Toronto's finest teachers for lessons, including Jeff Salem, Paul Delong, and Rick Gratton. Then in 1999, Famularo invited Stéphane to study at his studio in New York. While studying with Dom, Stéphane not only developed his musical skills, he also gained insight about the business side of music and how to become an effective educator.

In 2002, Stéphane received a professional artist grant from the Council Of Arts Of Québec, and he established his own company, DrumChamber Productions, which offers various music and drumming related services. That same year, Stéphane began a partnership with Famularo, resulting in the opening of a Canadian wing of the innovative teaching facility Wizdom DrumShed. At the DrumShed, Chamberland teaches private lessons to over ninety students. He's also conducted over 150 workshops in the past three years. And in '03, Stéphane was awarded the Larry Londin Scholarship from the Percussive Arts Society.

Hometown: Québec City, Canada
Education: Wizdom DrumShed
Tools: Vic Firth sticks and headphones, Sabian cymbals, Remo drumheads, Audix microphones, LP percussion
More info: www.stephanechamberland.com

Erick Sherman

Finding His Own Way

With a penchant for noise rock mayhem, bouncy new wave grooves, and anthemic sing-along endings, Indiana's art rockers Everything, Now! are clearly a band that knows no musical boundaries. For proof, check out their 2004 Standard Records release, *Police, Police!* Each tune on this seven-track disc takes on a life of its own, incorporating crunchy guitars, quirky lyrics, and unexpected percussive textures into the mix.

At the helm of the Everything, Now!'s rhythmic madness is drummer Erick Sherman. Sherman's creative approach is a perfect complement to the band's unique sound. His energetic and passionate groove drives through rockers like "Massacre" and "Double Bath," while his keen sense of dynamics elevates the somber mood of "Rocketship, IN!" And his humorous side comes into play during the marching waltz ending of "I Live In A Trailor Park."

In addition to his busy touring and recording schedule with Everything, Now!, Erick is a member of fellow Indiana musician Eric Alexander's backing band. He's also working on his own instrumental projects with bassist Richard

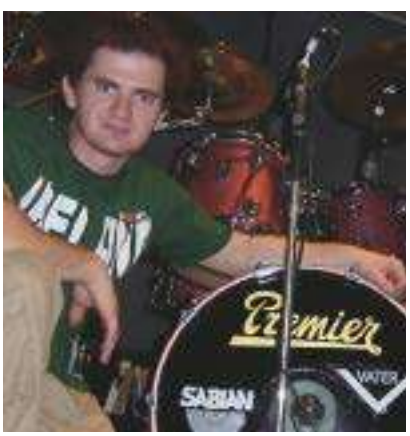
Knapp, and he's recording a hip-hop record with Kid Primitive.

Hometown: Muncie, Indiana
Tools: Yamaha drums, Ludwig and Mapex snares, Zildjian cymbals, and Tama hardware
Influences: Joe Morello, Mike Lowry, Dave Weckl, David Garibaldi, Butch, ?uestlove, Tim Alexander, Tom Waits, Frank Zappa, Bjork, Nick Cave, Bobby McFerrin
More info: www.everythingnowmusic.com

Daniel Luttick

Australia's Rising Star

In 2002, Daniel Luttick's lifelong devotion to drumming began to pay off when he was voted "Australia's Up And Coming Drummer" by *DrumScene* magazine. Now the young drummer is applying his new found acclaim in a variety of musical situations. In addition to a hectic teaching schedule, Daniel is also busy performing and recording with his own fusion group, Xtreme Measures, and Melbourne metal band Synthetic Breed.



In both of these settings, Daniel's technical prowess is obvious. From his relentless double bass work and punishing grooves on Synthetic Breed's *Fractured*, to his offbeat drumming gymnastics with Xtreme Measures, Luttick is constantly pushing his abilities to the edge.

Commenting on his focused musical determination, Luttick states, "The level of which one chooses to develop his or her skills on the drums is a deep personal decision. I have decided to develop my skills to the best of my ability, for nothing more than a deeper understanding of my craft." He concludes, "Every day on the drums is a new, mysterious, and uncertain adventure." While Daniel is certainly carving a name for himself on the Australian music scene, he hopes to soon follow in the footsteps of fellow Australian artists Virgil Donati and Sam Aliano and make his mark on an international level.

Hometown: Melbourne, Australia
Education: 2002 graduate of Box Hill Institute in Melbourne, Australia
Tools: Premier drums, Sabian cymbals, Vater sticks
More info: www.daniellluttick.com

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- ★☆☆☆☆ Poor

★★★★☆

SCOTT AMENDOLA BAND BELIEVE

San Francisco–based drummer **SCOTT AMENDOLA** has the ability to be all over the musical map and yet grounded at the same time. His latest album finds him again in the company of talented Bay area cohorts **Nels Cline** and **Jeff Parker** (guitars), **John Shifflett** (bass), and **Jenny Scheinman** (violin). There's always strong, soulful modern instrumental music on Amendola's releases; check out the ten-minute protest song "Resistance" for this year's model. Amendola's timekeeping is beautiful throughout, and his choices are unexpected. If you didn't think he was a rocker, listen to "Believe," and if you wondered if he'd heard of Afrobeat drummer Tony Allen, check out "Oladipo." The avant-electronics of "Shady" lead into the drummer's free-forming over the mantra. He dons brushes on "Smarty Pants" before he and Shifflett go off on some of the most playful improv on the album. Some accomplished musicians are burdened by visiting so many genres, but Amendola and friends pull it off. (Cryptogramophone) **Robin Tolleson**

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JAZZ

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AVANT-WORLD

Tom Zé Estudando O Pagode (Trama) /// **Eval Maoz** Edom (Tzadik)

★★★★☆

CHICK COREA THE ULTIMATE ADVENTURE

There's a lot to absorb rhythmically in this inspiring new collection of electric/acoustic cinematic portraits from Corea. Studio greats **STEVE GADD** and **VINNIE COLAIUTA** are spectacular, tackling complex Latin, African, and Middle Eastern charts. Chick's *Touchstone* drummer, **TOM BRECHTLEIN**, percussionist **RUBEM DANTAS**, former Return To Forever percussionist/drummer **AIRTO**, and Egyptian percussionist **HOSSAM RAMZY** all turn in captivating performances. Listen closely; this is Corea's most exciting and diverse rhythmic adventure in years. (Concord) **Mike Haid**

RYE COALITION CURSES

★★★★½

On *Curses* (produced by **Dave Grohl**), New Jersey rock 'n' roll revisionists Rye Coalition take their cue from hard rock gods like AC/DC, KISS, and Thin Lizzy, cranking out big-bottomed boogie with hooks. Drummer **DAVID LETO** pounds like a modern-day amalgam of Phil Rudd and Brian Downey, swinging on the Southern-fried shuffle "Pussyfootin'," and clubbing out the monster beat on "Clutch The Pearls." Impressively, Leto manages to lay it down fat on "Between An I-ROC & A Hard Place" without laughing out loud. That takes skill. (Gem Blandsten) **Patrick Berkery**

JACOB FRED JAZZ ODYSSEY THE SAMENESS OF DIFFERENCE

★★★½

Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey takes a step out of the jam band world with *The Sameness Of Difference*. Now, this is a *jazz* group; never mind that they coyly cover Jimi Hendrix's "Electric Ladyland" and blast through Neil Young's "Don't Let It Bring You Down." They do it with more grace and flair than their close peers, and they improvise with precision and taste. Drummer **JASON SMART** continues to show great evolution in his chops. Mingus would like what they did with his tune "Fables Of Faubus," as well as their departure on Bjork's "Isobel." (Hyena) **Robin Tolleson**

CALEXICO GARDEN RUIN

★★★★½

If ever a band could lay claim to being atmospheric, cathartic, and beautiful all at once, it's Tucson's Calexico. **Joey Burns** (vocals, guitar) and **JOHN CONVERTINO** (drums, percussion) typically surround themselves with a sympathetic cast who help realize their music's epic grandeur and intimate motions, like a film unfolding in gorgeous slow motion. Like all great drummers, Convertino plays for the music. And though *Garden Ruin* is simplicity at its finest, songs this gorgeous would make any drummer happy to do his job. (Quarterstick/Touch And Go) **Ken Micallef**

SHERRIE MARICLE & THE DIVA JAZZ ORCHESTRA A TOMMY NEWSOME TRIBUTE

★★★½

New York's DIVA Jazz Orchestra is packed with solid soloists, and their execution of the Tommy Newsome book is first-rate. Led by drummer **SHERRIE MARICLE**, the orchestra is seriously dynamic, swings like mad, and is obviously experienced and inspired. Maricle's time and big band rhythmic conception is fine, even if her absolute feel sounds a little light. But she leads the orchestra with great panache and professionalism, exhibiting an enviable ease and grace at the drum chair. (Diva Jazz/Lightyear) **Ken Micallef**

UMPHREY'S MCGEE SAFETY IN NUMBERS

★★★½

Umphrey's McGee's third album opens familiarly enough, with an epic prog rocker full of fast unison figures and shifting meters. But then a delicate acoustic tune, complete with string section, shows the sextet going in a more serious, if not totally new, direction. The crunching guitars, double bass drumming, and wacky Umphrey's humor are generally toned down here, clearing the way for a refined studio statement. **KRIS MYERS** crafts meticulous full-kit arrangements with a beautiful sound from top to bottom. His crisply played parts aren't as outright funky as his work on 2004's *Anchor Drops*—further evidence of the band's recent song-oriented focus. (SCI Fidelity Records) **Michael Parillo**

OF FURTHER INTEREST

BLACK ON BLACK A TRIBUTE TO BLACK FLAG features a well-chosen lineup of bands covering tracks by the first and best group to successfully mix punk and metal. Dillinger Escape Plan, Bleeding Through, Coalesce, Converge, and the ultra-great Remembering Never are among those who convincingly capture Black Flag's anger *and* artfulness here. Individual drummers aren't listed in the credits, but band Web sites are, so plop down a few bucks and start your research. (Reignition) **Adam Budofsky**

THE STROKES FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF EARTH
After two albums of relatively straightforward playing, *First Impressions Of Earth* finds Strokes drummer Fab Moretti starting to spread his percussive wings. In line with the rest of the garage-rock ensemble, there's a little more sophistication to Moretti's approach this time around. The more focused nature of Fab's performance likely makes this third Strokes album his best recording effort to date. (RCA/BMG) **Waleed Rashidi**

THE LOUNGE ART ENSEMBLE MUSIC FOR MODERNS
With these dozen bop-ish tunes, bandleader/composer Peter Erskine proves that restraint and fury, command and elasticity, and a firm grip and gentle touch are not always mutually exclusive. Erskine may not play loud, or blazingly fast, or even totally live (check out the loop he created for "Reason To Believe"), but his masterful stick control heightens the collective action. (www.petererskine.com) **Will Romano**

SUPERMERCADO SCARY BABY
Supermercado are not subtle. They are not quiet. And they are not without hooks. Drummer Gregg Potter has made a career out of sure-handedly driving heavy rock bands, and his swagger and command of an impressive array of grooves makes him perfect for the kind of bawdy radio rock this band excels at. Gregg isn't afraid to throw in slick licks for the fun of it, but he's a pro, and he isn't going to break the flow. (www.darkstarrecords.com) **Adam Budofsky**

SOILENT GREEN CONFRONTATION
It was nearly curtains for Soilent Green in 2001 when their van rolled after skidding on an icy highway. Following an extended period of recovery, the New Orleans quintet have returned with this blistering barrage of thrash/sludge-metal and hardcore. Throughout *Confrontation*, drummer Tommy Buckley's whirlwind style accentuates the group's demented guitars, while demanding its own spotlight. (Relapse) **Jeff Perlah**

MULTI-MEDIA

PLAYING WITH DRUM LOOPS
BY DONNY GRUENDLER

BOOK/CD LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED $29.95

★★★★½

Most of today's pop music is layered with loops, samples, and backing tracks that make it difficult for a drummer to understand and create what sounds and feels correct with the rest of the music. LA-based PIT instructor Donny Gruendler shares his wealth of knowledge on this subject in this 95-page book filled with 137 rock, pop, and hip-hop play-along loop charts. Gruendler suggests the best options for acoustic drumset accompaniment and explains why. The programmed loops on the two discs are cleanly recorded and well coordinated with the charts, though the structure of several of those charts can be confusing to follow. The grooves may seem simple, but the feel and attitude take work to achieve. This ain't like playing to the old metronome! A worthwhile investment if you're looking to get into today's pop music scene. (Carl Fischer) **Mike Haid**

GROOVE ESSENTIALS: THE PLAY-ALONG
BY TOMMY IGOE

BOOK/CD/MP3 LEVEL: ALL $24.95

★★★★★

This 126-page play-along book/CD completes a perfect drumset instructional trifecta when combined with Igoe's *Groove Essentials* DVD from 2004 (sold separately). This is the most professional, comprehensive, well-written, user-friendly, and common-sense instructional for real world applications that I've seen. Igoe is an entertaining, effective, dynamic instructor, and here he stresses the importance of learning basic grooves from the musical styles (rock, jazz, funk, world) that working drummers most often encounter. Eighty-eight easy-to-follow charts with helpful commentary fill the book, while the six-hour play-along CD contains MP3 music files of all the charts, recorded by real musicians in real time, minus drums. A world-class package. (Hudson Music) **Mike Haid**

TAKING THE REINS

Inspired by his former maestro, Duke Ellington, on *The Sacred Music Of* ***LOUIE BELLSON***, the elder statesman stretches his composition chops in large-scale sacred works employing jazz and string orchestra with choir, as well as superb ensemble and solo drumming from the master himself. But don't equate "sacred" with "somber." It's an upbeat celebration. Swinging hard in his eighties, Bellson remains an exciting, ageless force. Praise the drums and drum for praise! (Percussion Power) **Jeff Potter**

Percussion royalty and MVP session cat **SAMMY FIGUEROA** leads a fiery sextet on his sizzling debut, *…And Sammy Walked In*. Culling Miami's finest talents, Figueroa's killing conga/percussion work puts the grease on effortlessly popping modern Latin jazz grooves. Also take note of the first-rate performance by up-and-comer kit man **GOTZ KUJACK**. Big fun! (Savant) **Jeff Potter**

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NEIL PEART ANATOMY OF A DRUM SOLO
DVD LEVEL: ALL $49.95

★★★★★

If any drummer in the history of rock music has earned the right to release a DVD on the anatomy of a drum solo, Rush drum god Neil Peart certainly qualifies. On this highly anticipated DVD, Peart meticulously dissects his musically thematic, methodically structured nine-minute "Der Trommler" solo from the Rush 30th Anniversary tour. The drummer articulately explains and performs each section of the piece as a historical rhythmic evolution starting with the human heartbeat and evolving from African to European to jazz to rock influences, utilizing extensive electronics and his extravagant 30th-anniversary DW acoustic kit. High points: exquisite packaging and production, previously unreleased footage, Peart's lengthy in-studio "Explorations," various camera options, alternate edits, bonus footage, and a PDF file transcription of the entire "Der Trommler" solo. This package is a tour de force. (Hudson Music) **Mike Haid**

JUDAS PRIEST RISING IN THE EAST
DVD LEVEL: ALL $19.98

★★★★½

Judas Priest 2005 is no nostalgia act; it's a veritable Olympus of metal gods at the peak of their powers. In fact, *Rising*, recorded at Tokyo's Budokan, could be an instructional video for aspiring purveyors of heaviness. Everything from **Rob Halford**'s soaring screams to the guitarists' shredster heroics to **Ian Hill**'s battle-ax bass wielding shows metal done right. **SCOTT TRAVIS**, too, is in prime form, blazing huge hand-foot fills across a double bass kit that wouldn't fit in most living rooms. He even squeezes in some stellar stick tossing. Best of all, his sound is enormous and crystal clear, and the cameras capture him at all the right moments. You'll find yourself sympathizing with the fan who cries ecstatically when Halford introduces "Breaking The Law." (Rhino) **Michael Parillo**

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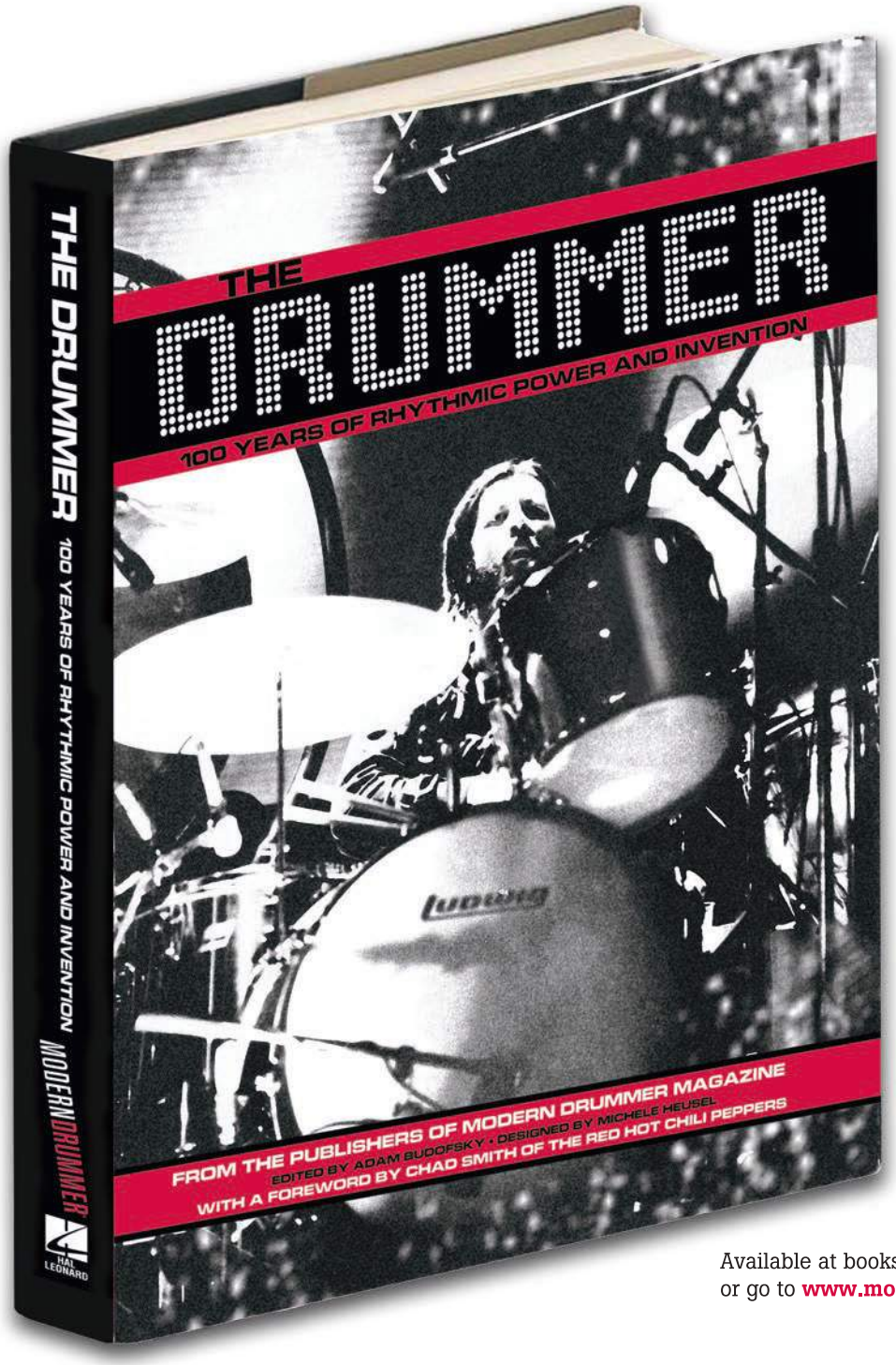

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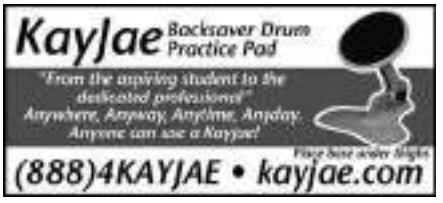
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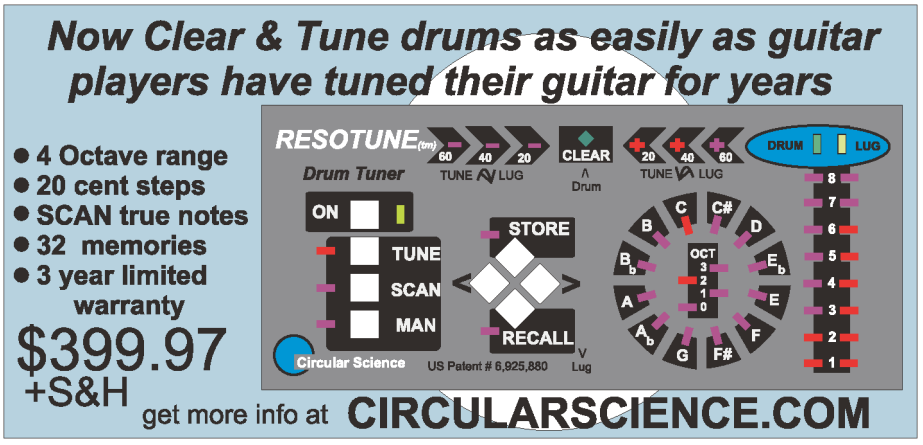
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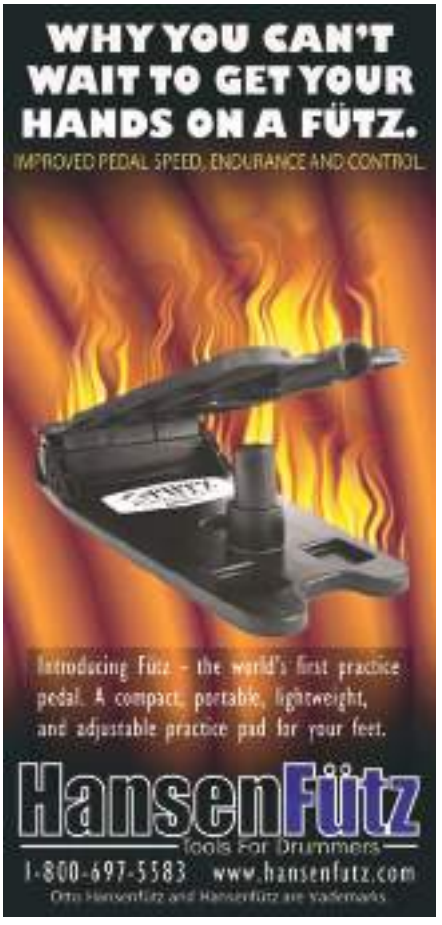
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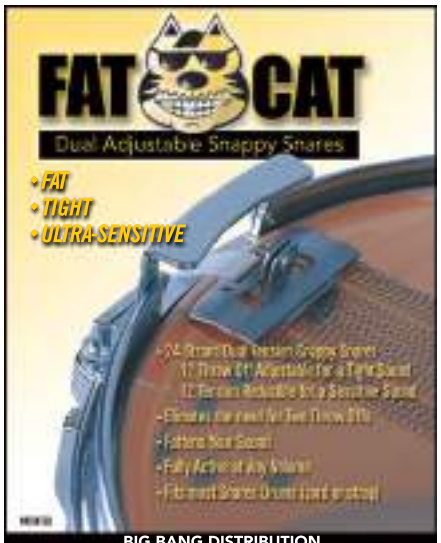

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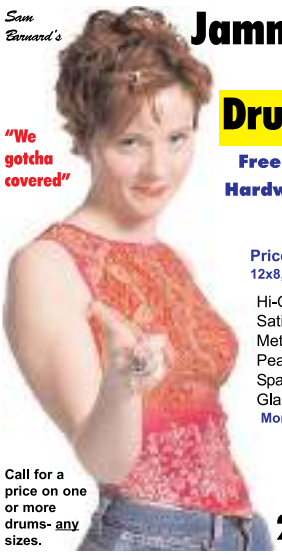

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DrumLAB: Clinics, concerts, and lessons in Toronto. **Drumlab.blogspot.com.**

Drummers: Learn all styles of drumming on all the percussion instruments, including drumset and mallets. John Bock Percussion Studio, (914) 592-9593.

NYC—Tabla. Learn Indian classical drumming with Misha Masud. All levels. Study in Indian rhythmic theory also offered for composers, jazz/fusion musicians. Tel: (212) 724-7223.

Baltimore-Washington: Grant Menefee's studio of drumming. B.M. Berklee College of Music. All styles and levels. Tel: (410) 747-STIX.

Silver Spring, MD—Mike Reeves. Beginner to advanced. (240) 423-8644.

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New! Video clips, free drum lessons, drum videos, monthly giveaways at Dave Bedrock's americandrumschool.com.

Www.chriscawthray.com—roots/jazz/rock, featured in 12/05 MD Critique.

Www.buildyourowndrums.com.

Www.MusiciansContact.com. Need work? Paying jobs and resumes online. Thousands of satisfied members since 1969, tel: (818) 888-7879.

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For Sale

A Drummer's Tradition features an incredible collection of vintage drums for sale. Visit our shop in San Rafael, California, or check our Web site at www.adrummerstradition.com for weekly updates. We are always buying! Call 10–6 PST, Mon–Sat, tel: (415) 458-1688, fax: (415) 458-1689.

Vintage: Snares, sets, singles, cymbals, hardware, logos, and trades. Look/see, www.drumatix.com.

You need: **Drumfarm** vintage drum list. Bobby Chiasson's Jollity Drum Farm, 420 Coach Road, Argyle, NY 12809. Tel: (518) 638-8559, www.drumfarm.com.

The Ludwig Book! by Rob Cook. Business history and dating guide, 300 pages (64 color), Wm. F. Ludwig II autobiography, books on Rogers, Leedy, Slingerland, calfskin heads, gut snares, and more. Contact Rebeats, tel: (989) 463-4757, Rob@rebeats.com, Web site: www.rebeats.com.

Vintage Drum Center—Buy with confidence from an expert! Ludwig, Slingerland, Rogers, Gretsch, Zildjian, and more. Money-back guarantee. Www.vintagedrum.com. Tel: (800) 729-3111.

Wanted

Unusual-finish drums: swirls, stars, top hats, engraved, etc. Also **Camco**, George Way, Gladstone, and Ringo drums. (800) 839-6634.

Immediate cash—Gretsch, K Zildjians, Ludwig, Rogers, Slingerland, Leedy. Vintage Drum Center. Tel: (800) 729-3111, or (641) 693-3611, **vintagedrum@lisco.com**.

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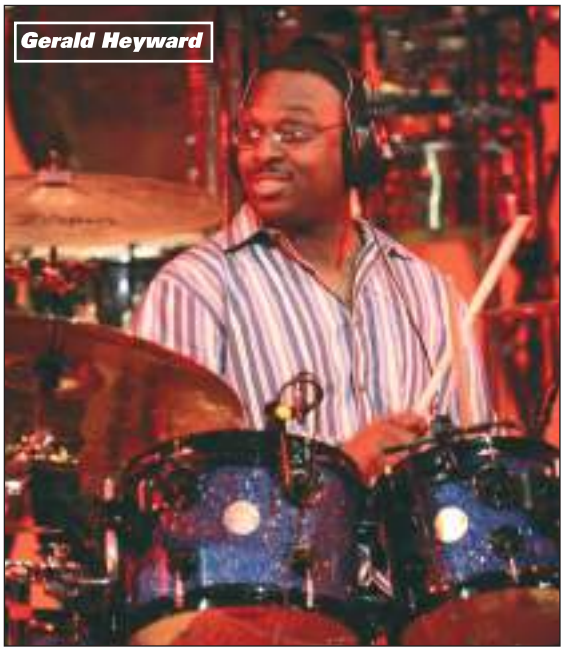
Drummers For Jesus 2006

The third annual International Drummers For Jesus Celebration took place at Irving Bible Church in Dallas, Texas this past February 24 and 25. It began with a Friday-night concert that featured a stellar lineup of drummers, backed by a superb rhythm section and spirited horn and vocal accompaniment. Each drummer had the opportunity to display amazing chops and deep grooves, all in praise to the Lord. Many also offered advice and words of encouragement to those in attendance.



John Blackwell Jr. and **Gerald Heyward** set the tone for the evening by establishing a groove to a fine arrangement of "Little Drummer Boy." The two drummers then traded fours, with twirling sticks and thunderous tom fills that worked the listeners into a frenzy.

Next up was thirteen-year-old phenom **Derek Winkley**, who *nailed* a tune written by DFJ producer Carlos Benson. Derek was followed by percussionist **C.G. Ryche**, who, though seemingly boxed in by an array of percussion and cymbals, managed to add sparkle to the music. He laid down a serious groove while providing a visual experience that wowed the audience.

Lou Santiago Jr. (currently drumming for Gospel rock artist Jeff Deyo) has become a perennial DFJ favorite. His growth as a drummer was evident as he locked down the pocket and demonstrated fiery chops. Lou was followed by **Andrew J. Lloyd**, who played steel drums on two compositions from films he scored.

Gregg Bissonette and **Sean McCurley** played to the Earth, Wind & Fire arrangement of The Beatles' "Got To Get You Into My Life." The two drummers took solos that exemplified taste, skill, and controlled aggression—along with youthful exuberance.

Multi-percussionist **Bill Bachman** amazed the crowd with his cross-sticking technique and a dazzling display of dexterity on marching quints. The talented **Christopher Coleman** then blazed through a composition that challenged the very capable band. He also spoke about moving forward in life and in drumming.

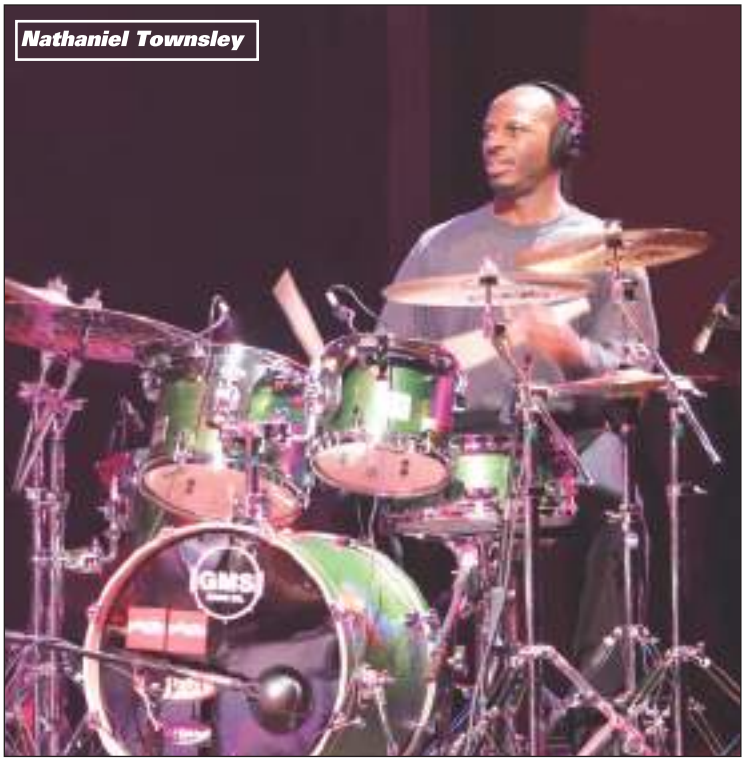
Nathaniel Townsley possesses some *formidable* chops. He played effortlessly on his kit, making it look all too easy. Still, his exhortation to the audience was, "You don't have to be Dennis, Vinnie, or Weckl. Strive to be the best *you* that you can be." The evening culminated with a rhythmic

jam on which all the artists added percussion to a groove provided by three drummers, the band, and a choir. Spontaneous praise and worship engulfed the auditorium.

Day two was dedicated to clinics and master classes held by **Carl Albrecht, Bill Bachman, Keith Banks, Gregg Bissonette, John Blackwell Jr., Terl Bryant, Gerald Heyward, Jeffrey Jones, Marvin McQuitty, Russ Miller, Johnny Rabb, Lou Santiago Jr., Robert "Sput" Seawright, Jason Thomas, Nathaniel Townsley,** and **Zoro.** Sponsors for the show included Aviom, Digidesign, DW, Evans, GMS, Mapex, Meinl, Paiste, Remo, Roland, Sabian, Shure, SLS, Sonor, Yamaha, and Zildjian. The DVD of this year's event will be available soon. Check www.drummersforjesus.com for further information.

Story by Rodney Harrison
Photos by Eric Tolliver, except as indicated

Gregg Bissonette


Nathaniel Townsley

Christopher Coleman

Sean McCurley

Thirteen-year-old Derek Winkley

Rodney Harrison

Indy Quickies

Good news if you live in the UK or are planning a visit. Session great **Andy Newmark** (Sly Stone, John Lennon, Roxy Music) is accepting a limited number of private students. In the UK, call 01227 750 139 or 07887 990 348. From the US, dial 011 44 1227 750 139, or email andrew.newmark@zen.co.uk.

Gary Husband

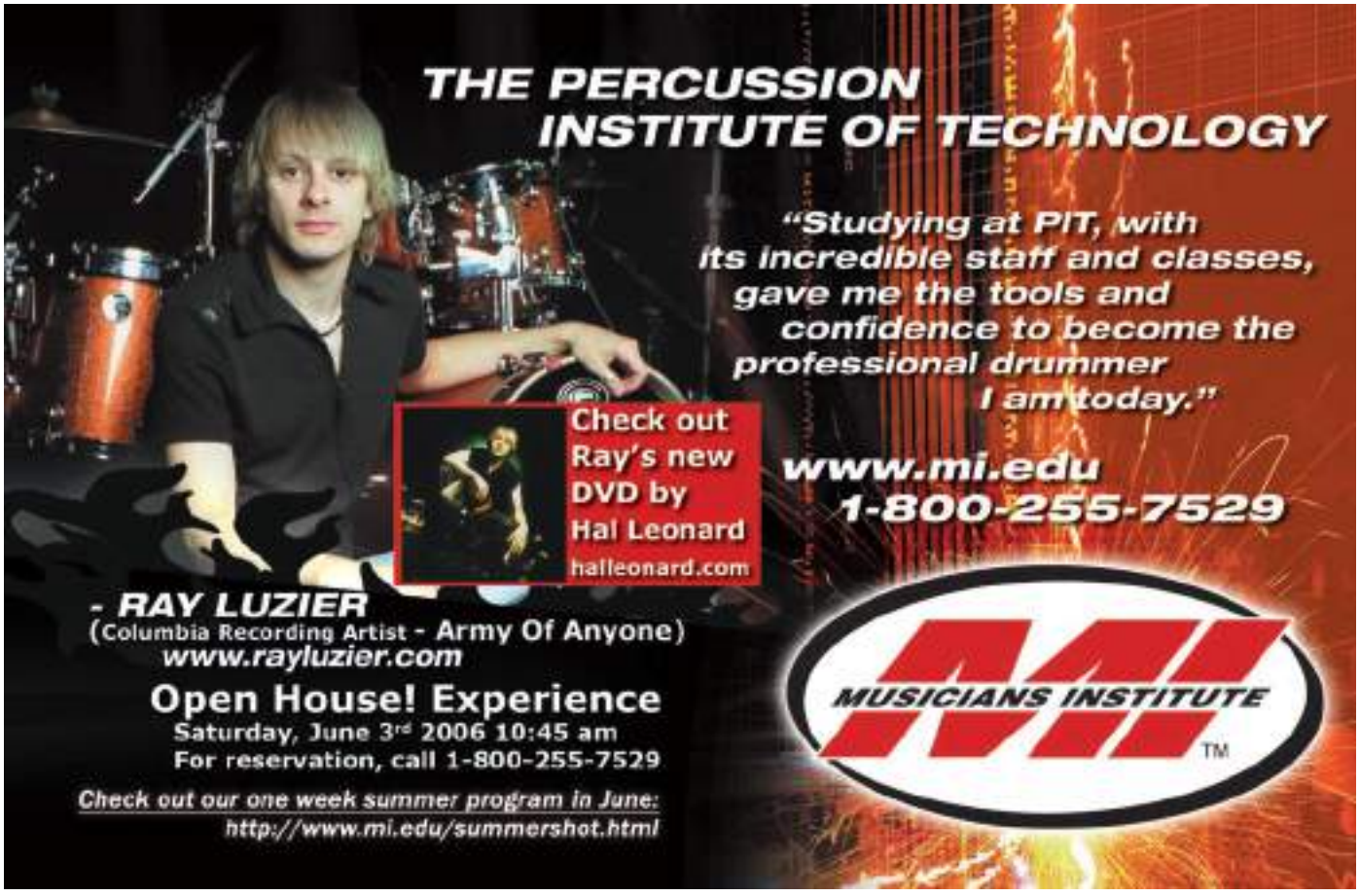
Gary Husband conducted a master class at London's **Drumtech** drum school this past February 1. His class focused on technique as it serves musicality, and on how best to approach professional performance.

The 16th annual **Custom & Vintage Drum Show** ("The Chicago Show") will be held May 20 and 21 at the Kane County Fairgrounds in St. Charles, Illinois. The exhibit area will feature displays from drum manufacturers, shops, and collectors. Presentations and performances will include appearances by **Ed Shaughnessy**, **Don Osborne**, and **Daniel Glass** (Royal Crown Revue), along with super-collector **Mike Curotto**, drum builder **Johnny Craviotto**, author/engraver **John Aldridge**, and show promoter/historian **Rob Cook**. For more information call (989) 463-4757, or go to www.rebeats.com.

Alfred Publishing and rock drumming legend **Carmine Appice** have inked an exclusive ten-year contract to create new instructional and pop drum titles. Alfred will also distribute Carmine's existing titles, including the classic *Ultimate Realistic Rock.*

Alfred Publishing executive vice president Ron Manus (left) and Carmine Appice

The winner of the **Stanton Moore Contest** that appeared in the November, December, and January issues of *Modern Drummer* is **Rich Noorigian** of New Jersey. Rich won a Gretsch Champagne Sparkle USA Custom Be-Bop kit, a set of Bosphorus cymbals, a set of DW hardware, Remo drumheads, a brick of Vic Firth Stanton Moore Signature sticks, and from Carl Fischer, both of Stanton's DVDs and a copy of Stanton's book. Congratulations to Rich from all of the sponsoring companies and *Modern Drummer*.



The Sacramento (California) Traditional Jazz Society has chosen **Mapex** to supply the drumsets for its Memorial Day Weekend Sacramento Jazz Jubilee. The four-day event attracts more than 100,000 visitors each year.

Pro-Mark has teamed with **Hal Leonard Publications** for an exciting Web-based contest that will run from April 1, 2006 through June 30. The contest is designed to promote the new Ed Shaughnessy DVD entitled *Taste, Time, Technique, And Timbre*, which has just been released by Hal Leonard. Visitors logging on to www.promark.com/shaughnessy may register to win product prizes from Pro-Mark and Hal Leonard, as well as to view a short video clip of the new Shaughnessy DVD. (877) PRO-MARK, www.promark.com.

Drum artist, historian, and publisher **John Aldridge** has sold his *Not So Modern Drummer* magazine to **Bill Ludwig III**. This marks the Ludwig family's re-entry into the drum industry twenty-four years after selling the Ludwig Drum Company. Aldridge will continue to edit *NSMD*, while Ludwig will take over day-to-day business management. **William F. Ludwig II** will also be contributing to the magazine.

John Aldridge (left) and Bill Ludwig III

Aldridge's new vintagedrumshop.com online store will provide access to Aldridge's custom engraving services, custom snare drums, and the books, DVDs, and videos previously sold through *NSMD*'s bookstore.

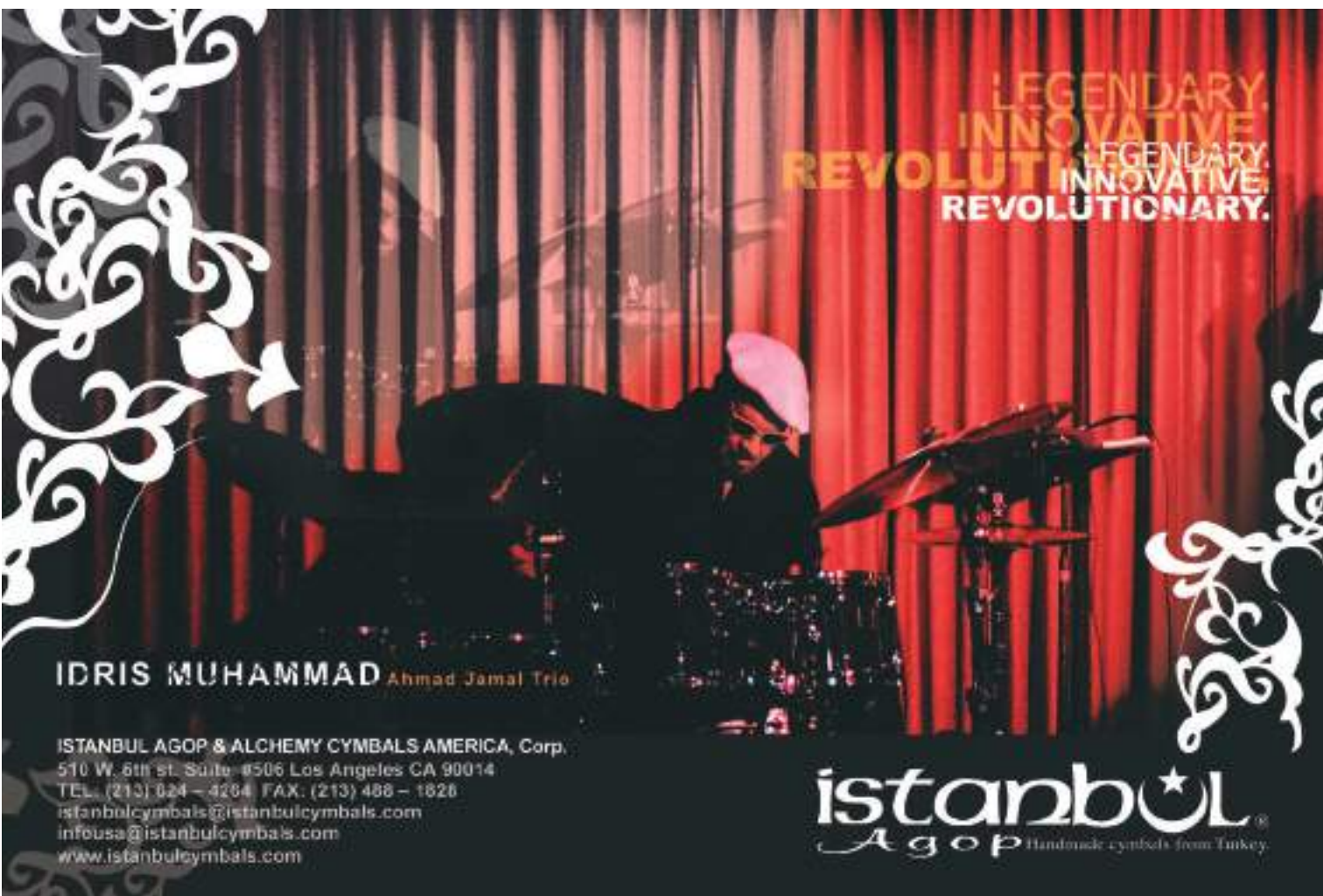
In Memoriam

Irv Kluger

Denise Truscello/Review-Journal

Veteran jazz drummer Irv Kluger died this past February 28, at the age of eighty-four. As a big band drummer in the 1940s and '50s, Kluger drummed for Artie Shaw, Stan Kenton, Woody Herman, Tommy Dorsey, and Count Basie. He also backed such noted vocalists as Frank Sinatra, Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughan, Nat King Cole, and Peggy Lee.

Kluger's recording work ranged from Dizzy Gillespie's "Salt Peanuts" to Sheb Wooley's novelty hit "Purple People Eater" and the theme for TV's *Bonanza*. In his later years, he became a local favorite as drummer and raconteur for the house band at Pogo's Tavern, a jazz club in Las Vegas.

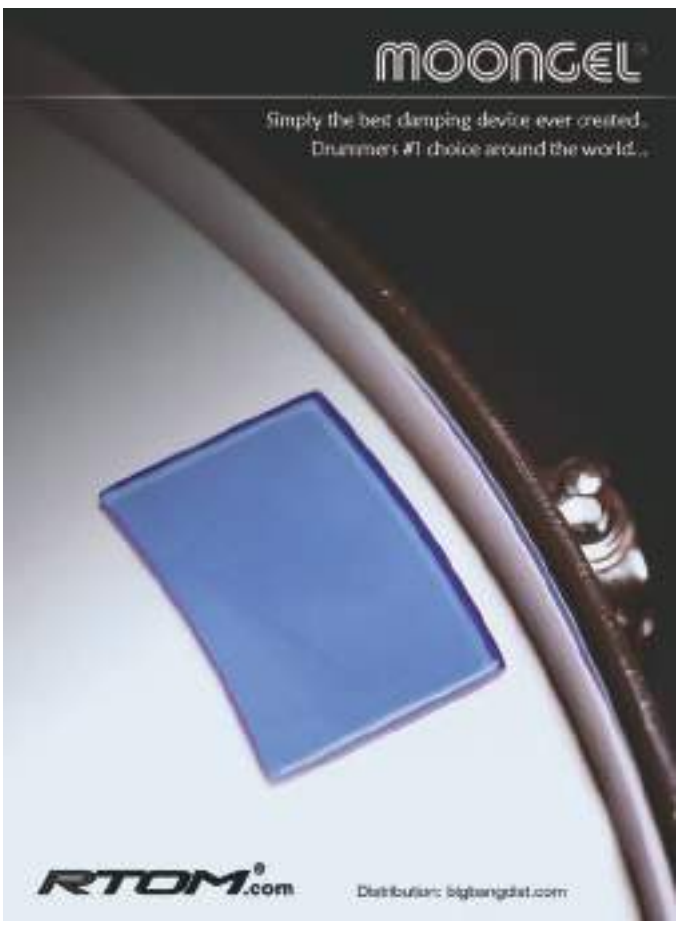


Who's Playing What

Legendary drummer and percussionist **Alex Acuña** and jazz great **Peter Erskine** are now playing DW drums, pedals, and hardware exclusively.

New Gretsch artists include studio and touring star **Steve Ferrone** and Bob Dylan's **George Recelli**.

Studio great **John "JR" Robinson** is now playing Paiste cymbals.



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courtesy of Aquarian, Drum Workshop, Tradition and Roughcorn

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Who's Playing What *continued*

Jazz drummer, percussionist, clinician, author, and educator **Steve Houghton** has signed on with Vic Firth as an endorser and special educational consultant.

New Pro-Mark artists include **Bun E. Carlos** (Cheap Trick), **Jamire Williams** (Jacky Terrasson), **Jonny Quinn** (Snow Patrol), **Andy Mrotek** (The Academy Is...), **Damion Reid** (Robert Glasper), **Calvin Rodgers** (Fred Hammond), and **Paul Koeler** (Silverstein).

Andres Bermudez (Timbajazz, Liquid Circle), **Magnus "Adde" Andreasson** (Hardcore Superstars), **Jake Davison** (Aiden), **Jim Bloodgood** (Sara Evans), **Thorsteinn Hannesson** (Worm Is Green), and **Dango** (Amber Pacific) are Meinl cymbal endorsers. Meanwhile, **Street Drum Corps** (**Frank Zummo**, **Bobby Alt**, and **Adam Alt**) are new Meinl percussion artists.

Donald Barrett (*Carson Daly Show*, Josh Kelly) is a new Yamaha artist.

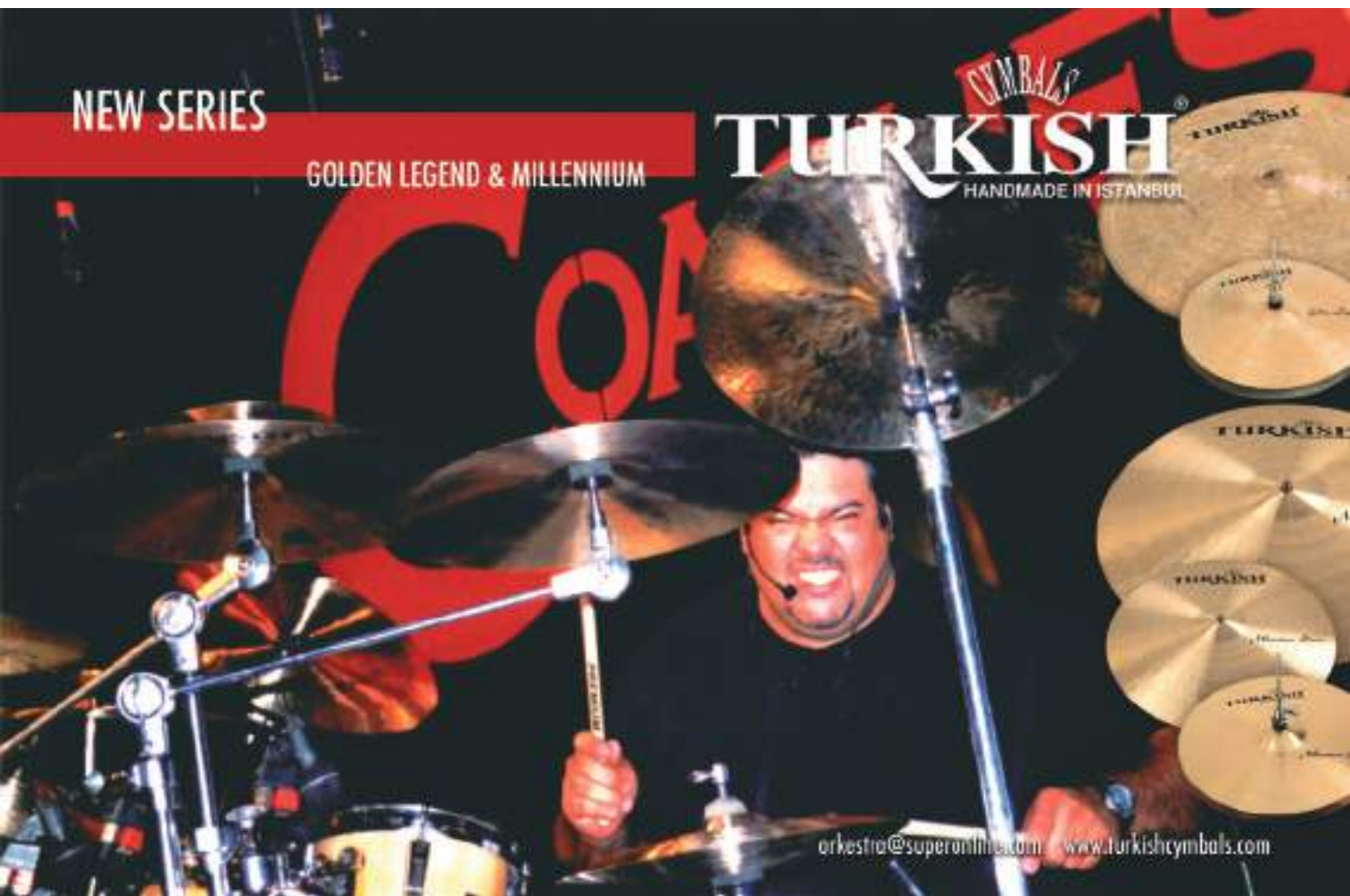
The **Clark Atlanta University Mighty Marching Panther Drumline** (featured

in the hit movie *Drumline* and on numerous commercials) has selected Premier marching percussion for their exclusive use.

Drummers using Trueline sticks now include **Jonah David** (Matisyahu), **Daniel Liljevist** (Katatonia), **Kerry Jacobsen** (Ian Moss), **Gabriel Jarrett** (Vorcza), and **Tim Austin** (Buddy Guy). Buddy Guy himself is using a polka-dot signature stick on several of his famed guitar solos.

The Hip Pickles (**Chet Doboe** and **Chris Scherer**) are now endorsing Impact drum and hardware cases.

Vic Firth's artist roster now includes **Steve Jordan** (Eric Clapton, John Mayer), **Roger Taylor** (Queen), **John Tempesta** (The Cult), **Orestes Vilato** and **Sammy Figueroa** (percussion greats), **Nick Hodgson** (The Kaiser Chiefs), **Paul Thompson** (Franz Ferdinand), **Herlin Riley** (Wynton Marsalis), and **Bob Bryar** (My Chemical Romance).



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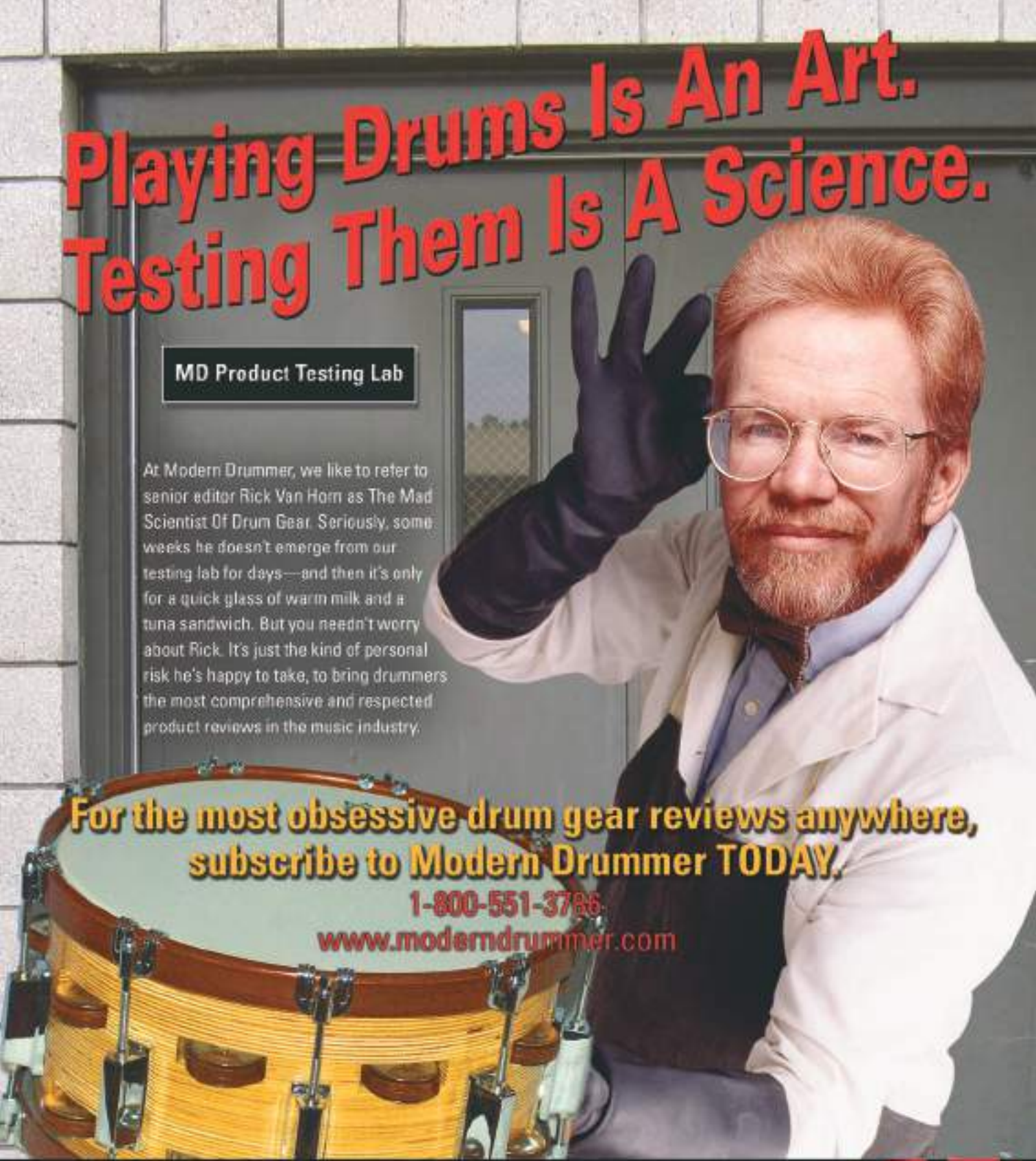
MD Product Testing Lab

At Modern Drummer, we like to refer to senior editor Rick Van Horn as The Mad Scientist Of Drum Gear. Seriously, some weeks he doesn't emerge from our testing lab for days—and then it's only for a quick glass of warm milk and a tuna sandwich. But you needn't worry about Rick. It's just the kind of personal risk he's happy to take, to bring drummers the most comprehensive and respected product reviews in the music industry.



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By the way, Rick will be just fine. We're positive. Well, pretty sure. Okay...it *is* true that he hasn't taken off that lab coat since last April....

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No other drum in its class even comes close to Superstar's completely pro features, incomparable sound and unrivaled power. And now you can add the skull cracking attack of two TAMA special edition Black Mini-Tymps FREE. When you buy a new Superstar 4pc or more kit from May 1, 2006 to July 31, 2006, TAMA will send you a set of black mini-tymps at no charge (and that means no shipping and handling charge either)! For more details, just go to www.TAMA.com/freetymps

MODERN L
FESTIVA

SEPTEMBE

EXPERIENCE THE MA

Andrew Lepley

Anyone who's ever attended the MD Festival Weekend has a story to tell: a timeless performance burned into their memory, a good friend they met on line, a great piece of gear they won. This year's Festival promises to provide more gargantuan

drum performances, special memories, and free gear than ever before. Reserve your seats now. There's just no way to know what kind of drumming magic you'll be part of. Go to www.moderndrummer.com. Look for the ON SALE icon.

Growth Spurt

Five years ago, Robert Howell of Caro, Michigan was given a five-piece Enforcer drumkit for Christmas by his wife. Little did she know what she was setting in motion.

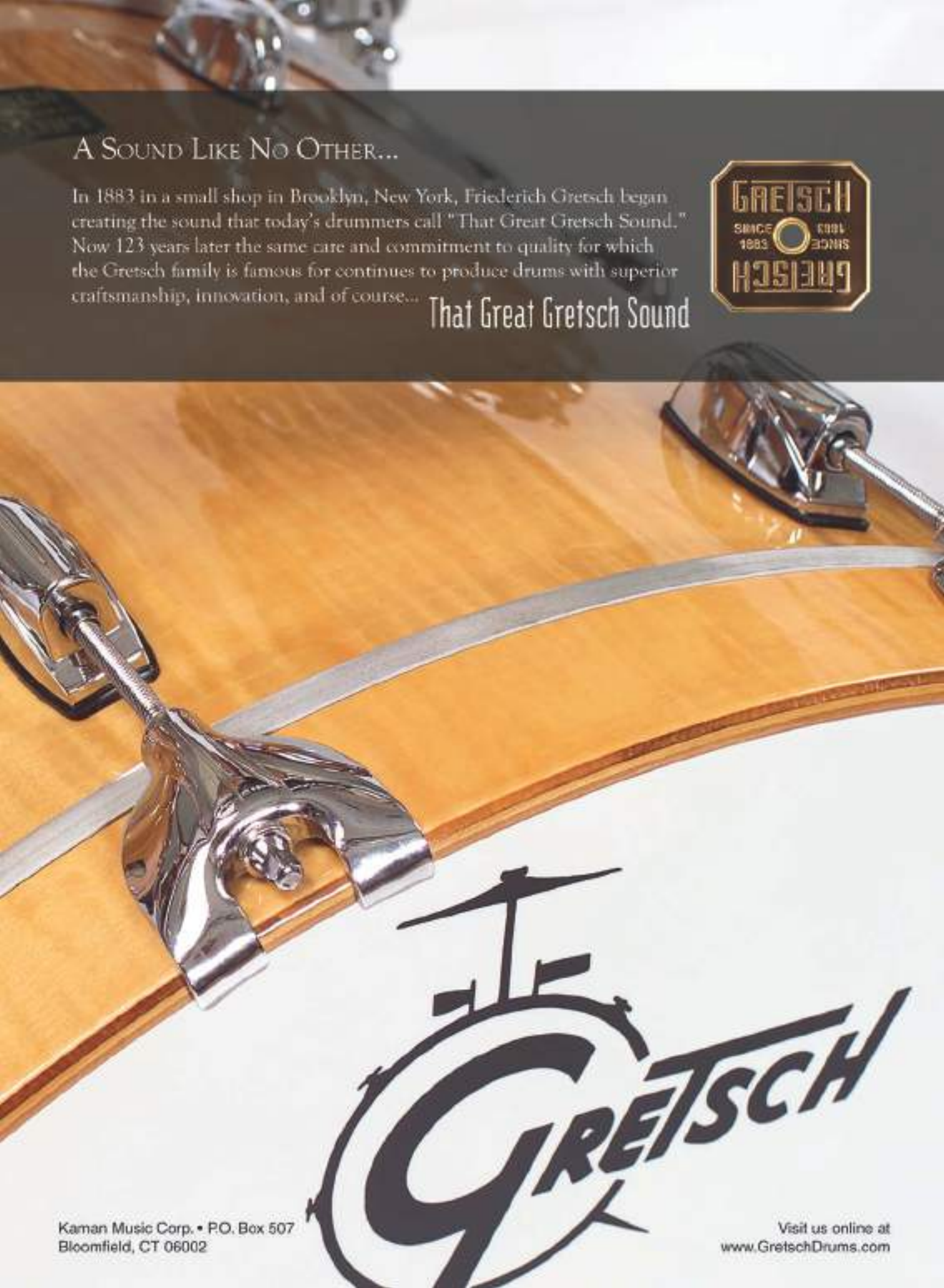
"Needless to say, I fell in love," says Robert. "I kept adding on to the kit, until today—five years and $16,000 later—I'm the proud owner of what I call my 'masterpiece.' That's because, to me, it's a work of art."

It's quite a work of engineering, too. Robert's kit combines two complete kits from Ludwig and Enforcer, additional Pearl floor toms, an additional snare drum, LP and Empire timbales, Remo RotoToms, Picante congas, Adam and CP bongos, Rhythm Tech and TreeWorks chimes, five cowbells, a 34" Sabian gong, and cymbals from Zildjian, Sabian, Paiste, and Camber.

PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides or high-resolution (300 dpi) digital photos are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit. 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit.

Send photo(s) to: Kit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.



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